



Legislation Text

File #: ID-441-20, **Version:** 1

Department of Finance, Utilities, and Parks and Recreation

Reference: 2021 Water SMART Grant

To: Mayor Gregory Mills and Members of City Council

Through: Marv Falconburg, Acting City Manager

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Date Prepared: September 3, 2020

PURPOSE

To present an opportunity to apply for a 2021 WaterSMART grant through the Bureau of Reclamation for a turf conversion project at Water Tower Park. Staff is seeking direction from Council on moving forward with the grant application.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA(S)

Financially Responsible
Sustainability
Innovative, Data-Driven, Results-Focused Government
Facilities, Amenities, and Open Space
Strategic, Supportable, Infrastructure

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

Water security is a high priority for the City of Brighton. In the summer of 2020, the City saw first-hand how tenuous our water supply is when a combination of growth, drought conditions, and increased watering brought the City to peak capacity over several days. To meet the increased demand, the City was required to purchase additional treated water from the City of Thornton. While production issues are something that will be addressed in the next several years with the expansion of the Greensand Water Treatment Plant, short-term the City must look at water conservation to ensure water availability meets the needs of our existing and growing community.

The City's Parks and Recreation program is regularly one of the top-five water users in the City, and the bulk of that water is used in irrigation of our many parks and sports fields. A particularly high user of water is Water Tower Park where the City operates three football fields. These fields are planted with Kentucky Blue Grass which is both non-native and a water-intensive plant. This combined with the heavy traffic experienced in this area due to regular games necessitates significant water use on these fields to keep them in good working order for continued use.

Parks and Recreation staff identified these fields as a prime location for turf conversion and water conservation. Based on the last several years of data, it is estimated that converting these fields would result in approximately 48M gallons of water savings over the life of the turf or the equivalent of approximately 73 Olympic swimming pools. Additional savings would also result from decreased maintenance needs tied to mowing and striping of fields.

This conversion project would replace water intense Kentucky Blue Grass at three football fields with synthetic turf, greatly reducing water and maintenance costs in these areas. As per the grant requirements, a resolution of support is required from the Council to be incorporated in the grant application. The overall project is expected to cost \$3,215,229 with the City providing a 50 percent match of \$1,607,615. This match can be achieved through a combination of in-kind staff time, grant funding from other entities, and appropriation of fund balance in Parks Capital, the General Fund, and Water Fund.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution authorizing the City of Brighton to apply for a Water and Energy Efficiency Program Grant.