



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: March 5, 2013

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Creeks Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Professional Services Contract With Goodwin Simon Strategic Research For Water Quality Public Opinion Research

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorize the Parks and Recreation Director to execute a professional services contract with Goodwin Simon Strategic Research in the amount of \$40,200 to conduct public opinion research related to creek restoration, water quality, and sources of creek and ocean water pollution.

DISCUSSION:

Background

The City's Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) requires that the City implement a broad outreach campaign to educate the community about sources of and solutions to storm water pollution. The SWMP also requires that the City conduct a survey once every five years to gauge the success of those efforts and measure public awareness of local water quality issues.

Since 2003, the Creeks Restoration and Water Quality Improvement Division (Creeks Division) of the Parks and Recreation Department has developed and distributed a wide variety of print, radio, and television media (including brochures, advertisements, and public service announcements) related to creek and ocean water pollution. This has been an important component of the effort to increase community awareness about sources of creek and ocean water pollution, and to encourage residents to adopt behaviors that help to prevent pollution. In addition, the Creeks Division has conducted numerous community forums, partnered with volunteers for stewardship projects, and provided information at public events.

A public opinion survey conducted in 2002 provided baseline information about community knowledge on issues related to creek restoration and water quality, and was used to develop an education plan to guide outreach efforts. In 2008, a follow-up survey

was conducted to gauge the success of the Creeks Division's efforts, and to compare public knowledge of storm water issues tested in the previous survey.

The results of the 2008 survey were used to refocus education and outreach efforts, and to update the education plan. The 2008 survey showed that only 42% of residents knew that water that enters the storm drain system is not treated. The Creeks Division has since implemented a series of television, radio, and print advertisements with the message "The Ocean Begins on Your Street," featuring beach activities taking place at the storm drain. The survey also showed that only 22% of residents knew that they lived in a watershed. Based on these results, the Creeks Division created outreach materials including a poster with an aerial photo of the City with creeks and watersheds delineated, and the message "Explore Your Watershed!" A larger format poster is also displayed at local events, and visitors are asked "Which Watershed Do You Live in?" and are invited to place a sticker on the poster where they live. These efforts continue to draw attention to the importance of keeping our streets and storm drains clean in order to protect creek and ocean water quality.

Scope of Work

The purpose of this follow-up public opinion research project is to allow the Creeks Division to measure the level of awareness of creek restoration and water quality issues and the impact of outreach and media strategies used, and to provide guidance for future outreach and education efforts.

The proposed research project includes an 18-minute telephone survey that will target 600 residents of the City of Santa Barbara. The survey will be conducted in both English and Spanish, and will include specific methodologies to ensure participation by difficult to survey segments of the community, such as residents who utilize cellular phones rather than land lines.

Goodwin Simon Strategic Research (GSSR) was selected from the responses to a request for proposals (RFP) issued by the Creeks Division in November 2012. Three proposals were received, and Creeks Division staff interviewed all three firms. GSSR was selected as the most qualified because of their extensive experience in both public opinion research and storm water and urban runoff pollution issues. GSSR also successfully conducted the Creeks Division's 2002 and 2008 surveys, and they are familiar with the sampling area and local creek and water quality issues.

Project Schedule and Reporting

The survey will be conducted in April 2013, and a final report will be completed in June 2013. GSSR will present the results to the Creeks Advisory Committee. The results of this research will provide guidance for the next phase of education and outreach program activities.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The total cost to complete this project is \$40,200. This amount includes questionnaire design, sampling, reporting, presentation, and project management, as well as translation, interviewing, sampling, and data processing costs. Funds for this project are appropriated in the Creeks Division's Fiscal Year 2013 operating budget.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

Reducing polluted urban runoff is critical for the protection of local creek and ocean water quality. An important goal of the Creeks Division's public outreach effort is to educate residents about specific behaviors and habits that can improve water quality. The public opinion research project will measure individuals' awareness of creek restoration and water quality issues, the impact of outreach and media strategies used, and provide guidance for future outreach and education efforts.

PREPARED BY: Cameron Benson, Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager

SUBMITTED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office