

# INDIAN WELLS CITY COUNCIL

## February 16, 2023



---

**To:** City Council  
**From:** Public Works Department  
**Prepared by:** Ken Seumalo, Public Works Director  
**Subject:** Indian Wells Turf Rebate Program Update

### RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Council **DISCUSSES** funding options related to the Turf Rebate Program; and  
If Council desires **APPROVES** Supplemental Appropriation for additional funding.

### DISCUSSION:

At the October 6, 2022, City Council Meeting, the Council implemented a \$500,000 turf rebate program for residential and Homeowner Association (HOA) properties. This program was developed in response to the drought declaration by the State of California requesting a reduction in water used for landscaping. The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) implemented their own turf rebate program to incentivize the replacement of turf with drought tolerant landscaping. The intent of this program is to reduce the amount of potable water being used for landscape irrigation.

As reported to the Council at the February 1 Strategic Planning Meeting, the City's residential turf rebate program has proven to be very successful. The residential component of the program has exhausted its budget allocation of \$300,000. However, the HOA component was not as active and has a balance of \$176,100. The City Council was clear that staff prioritize the HOA applications (as of January 31) have funds reserved for their approved projects. Staff has coordinated with the Coachella Valley Water District program administrator to update the City's program status.

As of January 31, there are 29 residential applications and four HOA applications pending. The total pending reimbursement amount for Residential applications is \$254,962 and \$26,400 for the HOA applications, for a total of \$281,362 pending as of January 31st. Based on Council discussion, Staff was given multiple scenarios which are assessed below:

1. Reimburse all pending applications on the waiting list as of January 31st: Reserve funds to reimburse 4-HOA applications in process and 29-Residential applications in process or on the waiting list. Make remaining HOA funds available to both HOA and Residential applications and approve a supplemental appropriation from the General Fund of \$105,262.
2. Limit the program to the original \$500,000 budget: Make the remaining \$176,100 from the HOA available to both Residential and HOA applications. Direct Staff to distribute the funds to the HOA applications first and to the Residential applications in order of the waiting list until funds are depleted.
3. Continue the program beyond the initial \$500,000 allocation: Approve a supplemental appropriation from the General Fund reserves for \$105,262 to account for all current and waiting list applications and approve a supplemental appropriation from the General Fund reserves for an amount agreed upon by the City Council.
  - a. At the time this report was prepared, an approximately 60 additional applications have been received since January 31<sup>st</sup>. These represent an estimated \$500,000 in additional rebate requests beyond the \$605,262 presented in Option #3.

Staff recommends Council approve one of the three options provided above, or provide alternative direction. Staff is also seeking direction on whether to continue or discontinue the turf rebate program.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Fiscal impact is dependent on the direction provided by the City Council from the options presented above. Any additional appropriations will be drawn against the City's General Fund.