



SCHMUESER | GORDON | MEYER
ENGINEERS | SURVEYORS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kevin Reidy, Colorado Water Conservation Board

FROM: Shannon Ullmann, PE, SGM, Inc.

DATE: May 24, 2011

RE: City of Rifle Water Efficiency Grant – Interim Progress Report

The City of Rifle's (the City) Water Conservation Plan is being implemented per its June 2010 Water Efficiency Grant Application to CWCB. The purpose of this memorandum is to document progress to CWCB and provide feedback regarding the proposed plan's goals and objectives. As identified in the Grant Application, the City identified six water conservation measures and programs to implement. These measures are identified as Tasks 01-06 in this memorandum and progress is described in the following text.

Task 01: Establish Landscaping and Irrigation Design Requirements for New Development

Task 02: Establish High-Efficiency Indoor Plumbing Fixture Design Requirements for New Development

Scheduled completion: Nov. 2011

Estimated completion to date: 20%

SGM, City Staff and the City's Attorney contemplated adopting various existing standards (EPA WaterSense, IPC, etc.). After extensive research the City has determined to implement its own standards that will be reasonably enforceable, do not require overhaul of its existing landscaping codes and are specific to the City and its residents. Staff has begun drafting code language for both indoor and outdoor requirements, simultaneously. The group anticipates 1-2 months to finalize draft language to present to a stakeholder group, and then to City Council. Among the greatest challenges facing the City is code implementation and enforcement. City staff will incorporate design standards into its existing code, but will require additional time to train inspectors.

Task 03: Create a Water Efficiency Web Site

Scheduled completion: Dec. 2011

Estimated completion to date: 35%

The City has launched a rudimentary website for advertising rebate programs related to Task 05 and intends to overhaul the website once content and organization is finalized. Preliminary content for the overhauled site has been developed and draft organization tree is under development.

Task 04: Create a City Facility Water Efficient Plumbing Fixture and Appliance Policy

Scheduled completion: Nov. 2011

Estimated completion to date: 0%

Task 05: Launch a “Smart” Irrigation Controller Rebate Program for Existing Residential Water Customers

Scheduled completion: Dec. 2012

Estimated completion to date: 40%

The City has selected rebate-eligible controllers, developed a standard audit, and begun accepting applications from residents for the Summer 2011 *Rifle RAIN* (Rebates and Audits for Irrigation Networks) Program. The City has also completed the bid process and selected an irrigation contractor who will conduct irrigation system audits, perform system improvements and install irrigation controllers. The primary program implementation challenge is disappointingly low participation interest (five applications have been submitted to-date with a goal of 60). The City is working towards additional advertising through monthly utility bill inserts, advertising in the local newspaper and strategically-placed program flyers. Depending on the effectiveness of the additional marketing efforts, the City may consider increasing the rebate dollar amounts and reducing the total possible number of rebates in order to improve participation.

Task 06: Launch a Rebate Program for High-Efficiency Toilets and Clothes Washers for Existing Water Customers

Scheduled completion: Jan. 2012

Estimated completion to date: 0%

Task 07: Project Management

Scheduled completion: Dec. 2012

Scheduled submission of 95% review: Jan. 2012

Estimated completion to date: 15%

Work to date has included coordination between City staff, Schmueser Gordon Meyer, and CWCB, including preparation of this interim progress report.

Summary

Implementation of the tasks identified in the June 2010 Grant Application has fallen behind schedule, but significant progress has been made. Challenges that have been encountered are summarized as follows:

- Implementing changes to the City’s Code to incorporate water conservation measures has proven to be significantly more work than originally anticipated. City Staff and its consultants have researched example codes, talked with representatives of other jurisdictions, evaluated the applicability of others’ codes to the City of Rifle and determined the level of enforcement effort required. City staff is considering all logistics associated with Code adoption and implementation (as they should) and is challenged by the unanticipatedly high level of effort required to draft code language revisions.
- As implementation of the City’s outdoor irrigation rebate program commenced, staff realized that advertising would be pivotal to success. While some time was spent towards marketing the rebates, the City has gotten less than 10% of the applications it anticipated. This may suggest that it was overly-optimistic in the level of participation it would get in one irrigation season.