

March 17, 2017



THE CITY OF ASPEN  
WATER DEPARTMENT

Colorado Water Conservation Board  
Attn: Kevin Reidy, Ben Wade  
1313 Sherman Street Rm. 721  
Denver, CO 80203

**RE: Status Report for the City of Aspen Water Efficient Landscaping Regulations  
CWCB Purchase Order #POGG1 PDAA 20160000000000001003**

Dear Mr. Reidy and Mr. Wade,

The purpose of this letter is to provide a "75% completion" status report for the City of Aspen Water Efficient Landscaping Project, per the CWCB grant program application guidelines. The project is within budget and within approximately two months of the updated schedule provided to you in November 2016. The City has met its in-kind hours contribution and is at approximately \$5,700 towards its cash contribution goal of at least \$12,400. The remaining cash contribution will be met prior to council approval.

The following is a summary of what has been completed since the mid-project status report dated November 2, 2016, organized according to our scope of work.

**1. WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPE REGULATION**

- Held a public stakeholder meeting on November 2, 2016 and multiple additional targeted stakeholder meetings to solicit feedback from landscaping contractors and professionals.
- Held multiple City of Aspen inter-departmental meetings between the utilities, engineering, and parks departments to coordinate the content, implementation, and enforcement procedures for the proposed landscaping standards.
- Met and coordinated with Pitkin County staff and Colorado Parks and Wildlife regarding landscape planting lists and potential restrictions associated with wildlife management.
- Developed a 3<sup>rd</sup> Draft Regulation (in the form of Water Efficient Landscaping Standards) for the final Stakeholder Meeting scheduled for February 14, 2017.
- Held a final public stakeholder meeting on February 14, 2017.
- Gave a March 8<sup>th</sup> presentation to City Manager, Public Works Director and Parks Director with status of draft water efficient landscaping standards and details surrounding proposed 12-month pilot program.

*This task has been expanded to include a substantial amount of additional coordination, both within City of Aspen staff and externally, as compared to what was described for and scoped under the grant application. This has allowed City of Aspen staff to more fully assess and prepare for the procedures that will be needed to implement and enforce the proposed regulation and water efficient landscaping standards.*

*At this time, staff are planning to make a recommendation to City Council to adopt a Water Efficient Landscaping Regulation that encompasses Water Efficient Landscaping Standards that can be updated as new information becomes available. Staff are considering the potential benefits of beginning with a 12-month pilot period, in which all of the standards and documentation described in the standards will be required but not enforced. The purpose of this pilot period would be to allow applicants some time to adjust to the additional project submittal information requirements, and would also allow the City to monitor the type of information being submitted and potentially update the standards prior to enforcement. Enforcement will require a coordinated effort between the City departments of utilities, engineering, and parks.*

## **2. LANDSCAPE WATER BUDGETS AND DEMONSTRATION**

- Worked with City of Aspen Parks department to review summer 2016 water use and expected changes for 2017 in areas with new water-efficient landscaping materials.
- Analyzed a sample of existing residential water accounts for a comparison of water use data and estimated irrigated acreage and planting types.
- Analyzed a sample of landscaping plans included in recent development permit applications to determine the type of information typically being provided at this time, prior to implementing the standards and to confirm the additional information needed to support a landscaping water budget allocation. The sample plan water budgets were estimated using the draft water budget calculation method and used to inform the City policy decision on including a water budget component in the draft standards.
- Modified the recommended water budget approach to include more detail associated with both the type of landscaping materials and type of irrigation equipment.

*This task has been modified and expanded to include a review of residential water use, typical landscaping plans, and the development of a more complete water budget planning tool for use with the proposed water efficient landscaping standards. These efforts were needed to better understand the potential water savings that may be achieved through implementing the proposed standards. The potential savings appear to be on target or potentially greater than previously estimated in the City's Water Efficiency Plan.*

*While the originally scoped work related to reviewing historical water usage from public/municipal spaces has been completed, it was not as directly applicable as originally anticipated. Low water use landscaping materials were installed at Paepcke Park and at the utilities department. A total of 8 Gardens in a Box were installed in an 800 sq. ft. zone at Paepcke Park, as well as additional Columbine and low water use ground cover. Four Gardens in a Box were installed just outside the security gate at the Aspen Water Campus along with a variety of low water use shrubs. Both of these city installs provide a visual example of the beauty and variety of low water, efficient landscaping practices. Water staff also met with representatives from Grand Junction Pipe and Supply who ended up donating a \$1,200 ET Controller for Hillyard Park along with associated labor for its installation last summer. Grand Junction Pipe will also be donating a smaller ET controller this year for installation at the trailhead of Oklahoma Flats Trail*

*The water budget development, landscaping and irrigation system technology demonstration, and related water use analyses compliment and overlap with other water efficiency programs being*

*implemented under the City's Water Efficiency Plan. There will be opportunity to continue using this information into the future.*

### 3. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

- Assisted in facilitating the Stakeholder Meeting on November 2 and multiple Staff Work Sessions.
- Project invoicing, progress reporting, and project management.

The City of Aspen is grateful for the financial and technical support of CWCB during the past year as we implement our first water efficient program that is tied to land use. We hope to share our lessons learned and adopted water efficient landscaping standards with other West Slope water providers after this ordinance is adopted in the next couple months.

Thank you again for partnering with the City of Aspen and specifically the Water Department on this exciting new water efficiency program.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Ledesma', with a stylized, flowing script.

Lee Ledesma  
Utilities Finance and Administrative Services Manager