



WEST VALLEY WATER DISTRICT
855 W. Base Line Road, Rialto, CA 92376
PH: (909) 875-1804 FAX: (909) 875-1849

**POLICY REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA**

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2024 - 6:00 PM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that West Valley Water District has called a meeting of the Policy Review and Oversight Committee to meet in the Administrative Conference Room, 855 W. Base Line Road, Rialto, CA 92376.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President Gregory Young, Chair
Director Kelvin Moore**

Members of the public may attend the meeting in person at 855 W. Base Line Road, Rialto, CA 92376, or you may join the meeting using Zoom by clicking this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8402937790>. Public comment may be submitted via Zoom, by telephone by calling the following number and access code: Dial: (888) 475-4499, Access Code: 840-293-7790, or via email to administration@wvwd.org.

If you require additional assistance, please contact administration@wvwd.org.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The public may address the Board on matters within its jurisdiction. Speakers are requested to keep their comments to no more than three (3) minutes. However, the Board of Directors is prohibited by State Law to take action on items not included on the printed agenda.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Updates to the Policy Review and Oversight Committee
2. Legislative Principles.
3. West Valley Water District Travel Policy.
4. Turf Rebate Survey.

IV. ADJOURN

DECLARATION OF POSTING:

I declare under penalty of perjury, that I am employed by the West Valley Water District and posted the foregoing Policy Review and Oversight Committee Agenda at the District Offices on October 10, 2024.

Elvia Dominguez

Elvia Dominguez, Board Secretary



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

DATE: October 15, 2024
TO: External Affairs Committee
FROM: Socorro Pantaleon, Gov't and Legislative Affairs Manager
SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

MEETING HISTORY:

09/30/24 External Affairs Committee REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

BACKGROUND:

West Valley Water District (WVWD) is committed to working with stakeholders and representatives in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. to effectively communicate legislative priorities and support our mission to provide ratepayers with safe, high quality and reliable water service at a reasonable rate. The policy's purpose is to guide District officials and staff in considering legislative or regulatory proposals that are likely to impact the District.

The purpose of identifying Legislative principles is to provide clear direction to District staff regarding monitoring and acting upon bills during state and federal legislative sessions. Adherence to the Legislative Principles will ensure that legislative request and responses will be administered consistently with “one voice”.

DISCUSSION:

To be effective and engaged these guiding principles will allow staff in coordination with our State and Federal Lobbyist to in a timely and effectively manner respond to legislative alerts from ACWA, CSDA and other advocacy groups to be a voice in the water industry. The overall strategy for the 2024-2025 legislative session is to ensure and enhance WVWD's operations and efficiency through the support or opposition of relevant legislation or policy initiatives.

The review of the legislative principles take into consideration: **best practices, legislative advocacy norms and lobbyist contract scope. Staff worked with our state lobbyist (California Strategies) to ensure that the priorities within this document align with the district's strategic plan.**

A legislative workshop was held on September 14, 2024 to discuss the document and for the Board of Directors to provide feedback on the review of the legislative principles.

On September 30, 2024 the External Affairs Committee supported Version 1 of the Legislative Principles that reflect industry norms for best advocacy practice.

Attached as **Exhibit A** are the proposed Legislative Principles.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the committee provide feedback to the legislative principles.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. 2024-2025 Legislative Principles
2. 2024-2025 Legislative Principles - Policy Committee

Title	Content	Comments
<p>Title</p> <p>Introduction</p>	<p>West Valley Water Districts Legislative Principles</p> <p>West Valley Water District (WVWD) recognizes the importance of an active legislative program to protect and advocate for the interests of its customers in a timely matter. This program aims to address the challenges posed by proposed legislation, define desired outcomes, and determine positions on issues impacting the region that align with our strategic plan adopted by the district.</p> <p>As is standard practice, all proposed legislation and recommendation will be presented to External Affairs at their regularly scheduled meetings.</p> <p>In some cases, legislative positions of the District are required prior to a schedule External Affairs Committee meeting. In times where action is required prior to a scheduled External Affairs meeting, staff will follow an “Urgent Review Protocol”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will present a summary of the proposed legislation with the recommendation to the External Affairs Committee members and copy the General Manager for their recommendation. • If the External Affairs Committee is unavailable due to time constraints, the information will be forwarded to the Executive Committee for their consideration. 	<p>Due to recent changes to the Strategic Plan, a minor modification is being made to include strategic pan goals including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity, Equity, Inclusion • Transparency • Advancing District initiatives • Customer Connection NEW!! <p>Info presented based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice • Legislative advocacy norms • Lobbyist contract scope

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once approved, the recommendation will be ready for the General Manager’s signature. <p>All positions taken on behalf of the District will be reported to the full Board. These legislative principles will be reviewed on an annual basis.</p>	
	<p>DISTRICT ROLES</p>	
<p>Board of Directors</p>	<p>Participates in meetings with legislators, agency representatives, and other stakeholders on behalf of WWWD.</p> <p>Review and advise on adopting a legislative platform for the incoming legislative year.</p> <p>Refrain from taking policy positions on behalf of WWWD, unless adopted by the full Board. Directors can take positions as private citizens of the community.</p>	
<p>General Manager and Public Outreach and Government Affairs Staff</p>	<p>Maintain a list of proposed legislation that may affect WWWD, its customers, and stakeholders.</p> <p>Monitor bills and work with associations such as, but not limited to: Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), American Water Works Association (AWWA), California Municipal Utilities Association (CMUA), California Water Efficiency Partnership (CalWEP) and local water agencies.</p> <p>Work with our wholesale and local retail agencies to advocate on behalf of the needs of the region.</p>	

	<p>Submit letters and give direction to lobbyists to advocate on behalf of WVWD in a timely manner.</p> <p>Participate in weekly meetings with lobbyists and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Establish relationships with stakeholders, legislators, staff and others on behalf of WVWD’s advocacy efforts.</p>	
Lobbyists	<p>Provide regular reports to staff and members of the external affairs committee on appropriate bills.</p> <p>Advise staff on State and Federal legislation, relevant budget impacts, funding opportunities, and issues that directly or indirectly impact WVWD in a timely manner.</p> <p>As necessary, attend hearings and provide testimony on behalf of WVWD, as directed by staff.</p> <p>Maintain relationships with legislators, stakeholders and staff on behalf of WVWD.</p> <p>Maintain regular meetings with WVWD.</p> <p>Provide End of the Year update to WVWD Board of Directors.</p>	
Summary of the positions considered by	<p>When considering legislative or regulatory proposals, the Board may support or oppose based on the adopted policy principles.</p>	

<p>WVWD staff and Board of Directors</p>	<p>Actions that can be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SUPPORT: This position reflects the District’s interest in seeing the legislation become law. District staff and legislative advocates will work for passage of the bill in its present form.• SUPPORT IF AMENDED: This is an affirmative position that suggests conditional support for a measure, but only if it is amended to incorporate specific amendments that directly address District priorities. Staff and legislative advocates will not advocate in support of the legislation unless it is amended as requested by the District.• WATCH: Take no action but monitor the bill to see if any amendments are added that may impact the District.• OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED: This is a position that suggests conditional opposition to a measure, unless it is amended to incorporate specific amendments that directly address District priorities. District staff and legislative advocates will not advocate in opposition to the legislation if it is amended as requested by the District.• OPPOSE: This position reflects the District’s interest in defeating the legislation. WVWD staff and legislative advocates will work for defeat of the measure in its present form and will not pursue amendments to address the measure’s shortcomings.	
--	--	--

WVWD 2024-2025 Legislative Priorities

Legislative Priority	Content	Link to Strategic Plan	Comments
Water Supply Reliability	<p>Support measures to expand surface and groundwater supply.</p> <p>Support legislation that enhances water reliability for the region and to the water supplies of West Valley Water District.</p> <p>Support funding, resources, and projects that promote sustainability and resiliency.</p> <p><i>Advocate for projects and initiatives that secure long-term water resources, including infrastructure improvements and new water sources.</i></p>	<p>Manage and Deliver a Safe, Reliable, and Sustainable Water Supply</p>	
Water-Use Efficiency	<p>Support legislation that encourages attainable water efficiency standards & best practices.</p>	<p>Manage and Deliver a Safe, Reliable, and Sustainable Water Supply</p>	

	<p>Support funding for cost-effective water use efficiency and conservation measures.</p> <p>Support the implementation of advanced water technologies and practices that reduce water usage.</p> <p>Support public awareness campaigns to educate customers about the importance of water conservation.</p>		
<p>Local Control</p>	<p>Support legislation that is beneficial to Special Districts.</p> <p>Support legislation that expands options for local supply development.</p> <p>Oppose a “public goods charge” or “water tax” on public water agencies or their customers.</p> <p>Oppose measures that may impede the district's ability to maintain day-to-day operations.</p> <p>Support legislative and regulatory efforts that minimize cost impacts of</p>	<p>Develop and Grow Effective Communication and Advocacy Practices</p>	

	<p>new or expanded regulations and discourage measures that impose an undue burden on customers.</p> <p>Oppose legislation that pushes for a “one-size fits all” policy</p>		
<p>Strategic Partnership and Coalition Building</p>	<p>Promote collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies to achieve common goals and address shared challenges.</p> <p>Support initiatives that foster partnerships with other water districts, community organizations, and stakeholders.</p> <p>Advocate for policies that encourage resource sharing and joint projects to improve regional water management and service delivery.</p>	<p>Strengthen Partnerships with Outside Agencies</p>	
<p>Workforce</p>	<p>Support legislation that creates workforce and training opportunities in the water industry.</p> <p>Support legislation that addresses economic equity across the water/wastewater industry and</p>	<p>Be an Exemplary Employer</p>	

	<p>encourages more protected class inclusion.</p> <p>Support regional efforts/programs that strengthen the water industry and its workforce.</p>		
<p>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion</p>	<p>Endorse initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within the water industry and community.</p> <p>Advocate for investments and funding allocations that promote a fair and equitable funding process for the public, ensuring diversity and equity considerations for disadvantaged communities.</p> <p>Support policies that ensure equitable access to water services for all customers, regardless of background or socioeconomic status.</p> <p>Advocate for representation and inclusion of diverse voices in decision-making processes.</p>	<p>Public Trust & Integrity</p>	

<p>Transparency</p>	<p>Support legislation that allows for greater public access to public meetings.</p> <p>Support measures that encourage the streamlining of processes to respond to public records requests.</p> <p>Support measures that protect and advance local governance and transparency.</p> <p>Advocate for practices that build trust and accountability between WVWD and its customers.</p>	<p>Public Trust and Integrity</p>	
<p>Advancing District initiatives</p>	<p>Protect local revenue sources and reserve funds.</p> <p>Maintain local government control over the rate-setting process.</p> <p>Prioritize cybersecurity to protect sensitive information and ensure compliance with legislative regulations related to data privacy and security.</p> <p>Use Information Technology (IT) tools to facilitate collaboration and</p>	<p>Effective Financial Stewardship</p> <p>Sound Planning, Innovation, and Best Practices</p>	

	<p>communication within the district and with external stakeholders.</p> <p>Embrace digital transformation initiatives to modernize processes and improve service delivery to our customers.</p>		
Water- Energy Nexus	<p>Support funding opportunities for investment in backup energy storage and other infrastructure needs to prepare public agencies to address Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events.</p> <p>Support preparation for broader deployment of zero-emission fleet vehicles and support efforts to manage energy use.</p>	<p>Sound Planning, Innovation, and Best Practices</p> <p>Health, Safety, and Regulatory Compliance</p>	
Access to Safe Affordable Drinking Water	<p>Support sensible, long-term solutions to assist disadvantaged communities with reliable access to safe, affordable drinking water.</p> <p>Oppose measures that impose fees on drinking water that would increase cost.</p>	<p>Manage and Deliver a Safe, Reliable, and Sustainable Water Supply</p>	

<p>Water Quality</p>	<p>Support measures that promote innovative technologies.</p> <p>Support measures that promote advanced water technologies and practices that reduce water usage.</p> <p>Support measures that promote environmental stewardship, consistent with District’s mission and water rights.</p> <p>Support sound science & transparent regulatory processes in establishing drinking water standards.</p> <p>Advocate for funding and resources to address emerging contaminants and improve water treatment processes.</p> <p>Promote policies that protect water sources from pollution and degradation.</p>	<p>Manage and Deliver a Safe, Reliable, and Sustainable Water Supply</p> <p>Health, Safety, and Regulatory Compliance</p>	
<p>Customer Connection</p>	<p>Support initiatives that improve communication and responsiveness to customer needs and concerns.</p>	<p>Superior Customer Service</p>	

	<p>Support initiatives that promote water awareness campaigns in the region to educate our customers on the value of water.</p> <p>Advocate for the implementation of technologies and practices that streamline customer interactions and service delivery.</p>		
--	--	--	--

WVWD 2024-2025 Legislative Principles

Title	Content	Comments
Introduction	<p>West Valley Water District (WVWD) recognizes the importance of an active legislative program to protect and advocate for the interests of its customers in a timely matter. This program aims to address the challenges posed by proposed legislation, define desired outcomes, and determine positions on issues impacting the region that align with our strategic plan adopted by the district.</p> <p>Developed by Public Outreach and Government Affairs in conjunction with, Lobbyist, management and the Board of Directors, this document strives to cover the District’s anticipated needs and its positions for the legislative term.</p> <p>By adopting this platform, West Valley Water District’s Board of Directors sets a clear direction for staff to adopt official district positions on clearly stated legislative issues throughout the year. By doing this, the legislative approval process is streamlined by receiving clear direction at the beginning of the legislative session from the Board on pertinent legislative issues.</p> <p>On both federal and state levels, West Valley may support legislative proposals, policies, and regulatory actions that are consistent with the Platform. WVWD may oppose those legislative proposals, policies, and regulatory actions that are inconsistent with Platform. In cases where a legislative proposal, policy, or regulatory action is not a priority for WVWD but may affect the water industry, WVWD may choose to take a “watch” position.</p> <p>Any legislative positions and/or actions that are deemed as potentially “controversial” by the General Manager will be presented to the Board for further action. Generally, WVWD will not address matters that are not pertinent to West Valley’s services, such as social or international issues. Items not addressed in the Platform or Priorities may require further Board direction.</p> <p>For proposed legislation, consistent with West Valley’s Legislative Platform, WVWD staff shall be authorized to prepare position letters for the General Manager’s signature. The General Manager or the Government Affairs Manager will inform the Board of Directors of WVWD's actions through written communication to the Board of Directors on advocacy efforts.</p> <p>There may be issues that arise that are not addressed in this platform or on which the Board may change its position. It is anticipated that staff will continue to interact with the Board to ensure the iterative process necessary to ensure that the advocacy needs of WVWD are met.</p> <p>Throughout the year, the Board may also take additional steps to direct staff to oppose or support policy initiatives as they arise.</p>	

DISTRICT ROLES		
Board of Directors	<p>Participates in meetings with legislators, agency representatives, and other stakeholders on behalf of WVWD.</p> <p>Review and advise on adopting a legislative platform for the incoming legislative year</p> <p>Refrain from taking policy positions on behalf of WVWD, unless adopted by the full Board. Directors can take positions as private citizens of the community.</p>	
General Manager and Public Outreach and Government Affairs Staff	<p>Maintain a list of proposed legislation that may affect WVWD, its customers, and stakeholders.</p> <p>Monitor bills and work with associations such as, but not limited to: Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), American Water Works Association (AWWA), California Municipal Utilities Association (CMUA), California Water Efficiency Partnership (CalWEP), Southern California Water Coalition (SCWC) and local water agencies.</p> <p>Work with our wholesale and local retail agencies to advocate on behalf of the needs of the region.</p> <p>Submit letters and give direction to lobbyists to advocate on behalf of WVWD in a timely manner.</p> <p>Participate in weekly meetings with lobbyists and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Establish relationships with stakeholders, legislators, staff and others on behalf of WVWD's advocacy efforts.</p>	
Lobbyists	<p>Provide regular reports to staff and members of the external affairs committee on appropriate bills.</p> <p>Advise staff on State and Federal legislation, relevant budget impacts, funding opportunities, and issues that directly or indirectly impact WVWD in a timely manner.</p> <p>As necessary, attend hearings and provide testimony on behalf of WVWD, as directed by staff.</p> <p>Maintain relationships with legislators, stakeholders and staff on behalf of WVWD.</p> <p>Maintain regular meetings with WVWD.</p> <p>Provide End of the Year update to WVWD Board of Directors.</p>	
Summary of the positions considered by WVWD staff	<p>When considering legislative or regulatory proposals, the Board may support or oppose based on the adopted policy principles.</p> <p>Actions that can be taken:</p>	

<p>and Board of Directors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SUPPORT: This position reflects the District’s interest in seeing the legislation become law. District staff and legislative advocates will work for passage of the bill in its present form. • SUPPORT IF AMENDED: This is an affirmative position that suggests conditional support for a measure, but only if it is amended to incorporate specific amendments that directly address District priorities. Staff and legislative advocates will not advocate in support of the legislation unless it is amended as requested by the District. • WATCH: Take no action but monitor the bill to see if any amendments are added that may impact the District. • OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED: This is a position that suggests conditional opposition to a measure, unless it is amended to incorporate specific amendments that directly address District priorities. District staff and legislative advocates will not advocate in opposition to the legislation if it is amended as requested by the District. • OPPOSE: This position reflects the District’s interest in defeating the legislation. WVWD staff and legislative advocates will work for defeat of the measure in its present form and will not pursue amendments to address the measure’s shortcomings. 	
-------------------------------	---	--

WVWD 2024-2025 Legislative Priorities

Legislative Priority	Content	Link to Strategic Plan	Comments
<p>Water Supply Reliability</p>	<p>Support measures to expand surface and groundwater supply.</p> <p>Support legislation that enhances water reliability for the region and to the water supplies of West Valley Water District.</p> <p>Support funding, resources, and projects that promote sustainability and resiliency.</p> <p><i>Advocate for projects and initiatives that secure long-term water resources, including infrastructure improvements and new water sources.</i></p>	<p><i>Manage and Deliver a Safe, Reliable, and Sustainable Water Supply</i></p>	
<p>Water-Use Efficiency</p>	<p>Support legislation that encourages attainable water efficiency standards & best practices.</p> <p>Support funding for cost-effective water use efficiency and conservation measures.</p>	<p><i>Manage and Deliver a Safe, Reliable, and Sustainable Water Supply</i></p>	

	<p>Support the implementation of advanced water technologies and practices that reduce water usage.</p> <p>Support public awareness campaigns to educate customers about the importance of water conservation.</p>		
Local Control	<p>Support legislation that is beneficial to Special Districts.</p> <p>Support legislation that expands options for local supply development.</p> <p>Oppose a “public goods charge” or “water tax” on public water agencies or their customers.</p> <p>Oppose measures that may impede the district's ability to maintain day-to-day operations.</p> <p>Support legislative and regulatory efforts that minimize cost impacts of new or expanded regulations and discourage measures that impose an undue burden on customers.</p> <p>Oppose legislation that pushes for a “one-size fits all” policy</p>	Develop and Grow Effective Communication and Advocacy Practices	
Strategic Partnership and Coalition Building	<p>Promote collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies to achieve common goals and address shared challenges.</p> <p>Support initiatives that foster partnerships with other water districts, community organizations, and stakeholders.</p> <p>Advocate for policies that encourage resource sharing and joint projects to improve regional water management and service delivery.</p>	Strengthen Partnerships with Outside Agencies	
Workforce	<p>Support legislation that creates workforce and training opportunities in the water industry.</p> <p>Support legislation that addresses economic equity across the water/wastewater industry and encourages more protected class inclusion.</p> <p>Support regional efforts/programs that strengthen the water industry and its workforce.</p>	Be an Exemplary Employer	
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	<p>Endorse initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within the water industry and community.</p> <p>Advocate for investments and funding allocations that promote a fair and equitable funding process for the public, ensuring diversity and equity considerations for disadvantaged communities.</p>	Public Trust & Integrity	

	<p>Support policies that ensure equitable access to water services for all customers, regardless of background or socioeconomic status.</p> <p>Advocate for representation and inclusion of diverse voices in decision-making processes.</p>		
Transparency	<p>Support legislation that allows for greater public access to public meetings.</p> <p>Support measures that encourage the streamlining of processes to respond to public records requests.</p> <p>Support measures that protect and advance local governance and transparency.</p> <p>Advocate for practices that build trust and accountability between WVWD and its customers.</p>	Public Trust and Integrity	
Advancing District initiatives	<p>Protect local revenue sources and reserve funds.</p> <p>Maintain local government control over the rate-setting process.</p> <p>Prioritize cybersecurity to protect sensitive information and ensure compliance with legislative regulations related to data privacy and security.</p> <p>Use Information Technology (IT) tools to facilitate collaboration and communication within the district and with external stakeholders.</p> <p>Embrace digital transformation initiatives to modernize processes and improve service delivery to our customers.</p>	<p>Effective Financial Stewardship</p> <p>Sound Planning, Innovation, and Best Practices</p>	
Water- Energy Nexus	<p>Support funding opportunities for investment in backup energy storage and other infrastructure needs to prepare public agencies to address Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events.</p> <p>Support preparation for broader deployment of zero-emission fleet vehicles and support efforts to manage energy use.</p>	<p>Sound Planning, Innovation, and Best Practices</p> <p>Health, Safety, and Regulatory Compliance</p>	
Access to Safe Affordable Drinking Water	<p>Support sensible, long-term solutions to assist disadvantaged communities with reliable access to safe, affordable drinking water.</p> <p>Oppose measures that impose fees on drinking water that would increase cost.</p>	Manage and Deliver a Safe, Reliable, and Sustainable Water Supply	
Water Quality	<p>Support measures that promote innovative technologies.</p> <p>Support measures that promote advanced water technologies and practices that reduce water usage.</p>	<p>Manage and Deliver a Safe, Reliable, and Sustainable Water Supply</p> <p>Health, Safety, and Regulatory Compliance</p>	

	<p>Support measures that promote environmental stewardship, consistent with District’s mission and water rights.</p> <p>Support sound science & transparent regulatory processes in establishing drinking water standards.</p> <p>Advocate for funding and resources to address emerging contaminants and improve water treatment processes.</p> <p>Promote policies that protect water sources from pollution and degradation.</p>		
<p>Customer Connection</p>	<p>Support initiatives that improve communication and responsiveness to customer needs and concerns.</p> <p>Support initiatives that promote water awareness campaigns in the region to educate our customers on the value of water.</p> <p>Advocate for the implementation of technologies and practices that streamline customer interactions and service delivery.</p>	<p>Superior Customer Service</p>	



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
POLICY REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

DATE: October 15, 2024
TO: Policy Review and Oversight Committee
FROM: William Fox, Interim Chief Financial Officer
SUBJECT: WEST VALLEY WATER DISTRICT TRAVEL POLICY

BACKGROUND:

A proposed employee expense reimbursement policy was developed by the prior Finance Director. This policy was reviewed and used as the foundation for the proposed *West Valley Water District Travel Policy*. This proposed policy has been reviewed with the Policy Review & Oversight Committee and the Finance Committee. Both committees provided input, which has been incorporated into the proposed *West Valley Water District Travel Policy*. This policy memorializes existing practices that have not previously been placed in writing.

The District currently processes employee reimbursements requiring receipts for all amounts being submitted. Mileage reimbursements are at the standard IRS approved mileage rate. Employees frequently, but are not required to, include MapQuest or Google Directions to validate the distance being claimed for mileage reimbursement. Employees are encouraged to submit for reimbursement within thirty days of incurring expenses or upon return from a conference or other planned event. The reimbursements are evaluated based upon being actual and reasonable. They are reviewed and approved by the employee's immediate supervisor prior to submission to the Finance Department for payment.

DISCUSSION:

The District's current practice for employee reimbursement contains many controls that follow best practices. The proposed policy incorporates these and also provides opportunities to further enhance the existing practices. Further enhancements include the development of an employee expense reimbursement form and memorializes the use of cost guidelines in the form of per diems as published by the Federal Government for meals and incidental expenses. This provides a frame of reference for reasonableness of costs incurred and a consistent approach in documenting expenses and facilitating reimbursements to employees.

A benchmarking study was conducted to examine how other agencies handle their employee reimbursements. The results of the benchmarking study revealed that the proposed *West Valley Water District Travel Policy* incorporates best practices and will further strengthen the existing employee expense reimbursement process. As part of this enhancement process, an easy to complete employee expense reimbursement form was also developed.

The following are attached containing details: Exhibit A – Proposed West Valley Water District Travel Policy; Exhibit B – Proposed West Valley Water District Employee Expense Reimbursement Form; Exhibit C – Federal Government Table for per diems covering Meals and Incidental Costs. Additionally attached at Exhibit D is the benchmarking study of neighboring agencies related to employee reimbursements. The survey was presented to both the Policy & Oversight Committee and Finance Committee in two separate review sessions.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct financial impact of the development and implementation of the Administrative Policy regarding employee expense reimbursements. However, from an operational perspective additional guidelines will improve clarity and accountability.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the implementation of proposed West Valley Water District Travel Policy, West Valley Water District Employee Expense Reimbursement Form, and utilization of the Government Table for Meals and Incidental Costs as a guideline for employee travel expenses.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Exhibit A - Employee Travel Policy
2. Exhibit B - Employee Expense Report
3. Exhibit C - Per Diem Rates For Meals and Incidentals
4. Exhibit D - Benchmarking Presentation

EXHIBIT A

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



APPROVAL DATE	FINANCE POLICIES	POLICY NO.
APPROVED BY: Board of Directors	POLICY TITLE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES	EFFECTIVE DATE

West Valley Water District Travel Policy

Purpose

The District is authorized to pay actual and necessary expenses of employees related to travel, meals and lodging provided those expenses are incurred in the performance of their work, which apply directly to the management and operation of West Valley Water District government. The District recognizes the value and importance of such travel which relate either to representing District interests before other agencies or the business sector, and also provide the opportunity for the exchange of ideas and training as it relates to the performance of District duties. Department Heads, or designees, are expected to use discretion, common sense and good business judgement when approving travel reimbursement for employees. This policy sets forth guidelines and establishes uniform practices and policies regarding expenditures associated with these District business activities.

Definitions

1. District-Authorized Travel: Authorized activity which causes a District Employee to travel outside the District on approved District business.
2. Authorized Activities: District related business which has been approved by the General Manager, or his/her designee; the Department Head, or his/her designee, or by action of the District Board.

Persons Covered by This Policy/Approving Authority

This policy applies to District employees with respect to any request or proposal to expend or be reimbursed from District funds for costs incurred on official District business. For purposes of this Policy only, the "Approving Authority" for individual employees is their Department Head. Approving Authority for Department Heads is the General Manager.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



APPROVAL DATE	FINANCE POLICIES	POLICY NO.
APPROVED BY: Board of Directors	POLICY TITLE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES	EFFECTIVE DATE

If travel is requested when there are not adequate funds in the budget, then the employee must obtain approval for such travel and related expenses from the Department Head. This includes travel that is unanticipated but is necessary.

Travel Forms

The Human Resources Department maintains the *Training or Seminar Attendance Request Form* as part of District personnel policies. This is the authorization form for approval to attend training, seminars, and conferences. The Finance Department maintains the *West Valley Water District Employee Expense Reimbursement Form*, which is available on-line and in the Finance Department. This is used to document the costs incurred and for paying the employee amounts owed.

Authorized Activities

District funds must be used only for authorized District business. Expenses incurred in connection with the following types of activities generally constitute authorized expenses, as long as the other requirements of this Policy are met:

1. Communicating with representatives of regional, state and national government on District-adopted policy positions;
2. Attending educational seminars designed to improve employees' skill and information levels;
3. Participating in regional, state and national organizations whose activities affect the District's interests;
4. Recognizing service to the District (for example, thanking a longtime employee with a retirement gift or celebration of nominal value and cost);
5. Implementing a District-approved strategy for attracting or retaining businesses to the District, which will typically involve at least one staff member;
6. Meals when included or required in connection with attendance as a District

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



APPROVAL DATE	FINANCE POLICIES	POLICY NO.
APPROVED BY: Board of Directors	POLICY TITLE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES	EFFECTIVE DATE

4. Entertainment expenses, including theater, movies (either in-room or at the theater), sporting events (including gym, massage and/or golf related expenses), or other cultural events;
5. Non-mileage personal automobile expenses, including repairs, traffic citations, insurance or gasoline;
6. Personal losses incurred while on District business; and
7. Alcoholic beverages
8. Laundry Services
9. Tips must not exceed 20% if authorized purchase

Meals for Third Parties. As a general rule, public funds may not be expended to purchase meals for third parties. The General Manager is authorized to approve exceptions to this general rule on a case-by-case basis for meals included or associated with an official District-sponsored event or official District business.

Cost Control

To conserve District resources and keep expenses within community standards for District employees, expenditures should adhere to the following guidelines. In the event that expenses are incurred that exceed these guidelines, the cost borne or reimbursed by the District will be limited to the costs that fall within the guidelines.

Types of Reimbursable Expenses:

A. Category A – Local Travel:

- 1) Mileage: District employees who do not receive a monthly vehicle allowance or who do not have a District vehicle, may be reimbursed, based on a mileage rate, for use of their personal vehicles to conduct District business. Automobile mileage is reimbursed at Internal Revenue Service rates presently in effect (see www.irs.gov). (For example, for 2024, the rate is 67 cents per mile). These rates are designed to compensate the driver for

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



APPROVAL DATE	FINANCE POLICIES	POLICY NO.
APPROVED BY: Board of Directors	POLICY TITLE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES	EFFECTIVE DATE

reasonably consistent with scheduling needs and cargo space requirements must be used, using the most direct and time-efficient route. Government and group rates must be used when available. If an employee requests the use of a personal vehicle for his or her convenience, reimbursement will be for the lesser of (i) miles driven in excess of normal commute round trip mileage between home and the primary work place at the current IRS mileage rate or (ii) at the lowest economy-class airfare to the destination.

Airfare: Air transport by regularly scheduled carriers is presumed to be the most economical and reasonable for purposes of reimbursement under this policy. Common travel Web sites such as www.Expedia.com, www.Travelocity.com, or www.Orbitz.com should be used for price comparisons to determine the lowest convenient fare. Employees should book their reservations in advance to take advantage of reduced airfares. Non-commercial flying (including rented aircraft) may not be used by, nor reimbursed to employees at any time.

Automobile: Certain District employees receive a monthly vehicle allowance for use of their personal vehicles in performing duties for the District. Pursuant to Government Code section 1223, such vehicle allowances are provided as an alternative to mileage reimbursement. District employees who do not receive a monthly vehicle allowance may be reimbursed, based on a mileage rate, for use of their personal vehicles to conduct District business. Automobile mileage is reimbursed at Internal Revenue Service rates presently in effect (see www.irs.gov). (For example, for 2024, the rate is 67 cents per mile). These rates are designed to compensate the driver for gasoline, insurance, maintenance and other expenses associated with operating the vehicle. This amount does not include bridge and road tolls, which are separately reimbursable. Mileage rates will not be paid for rental vehicles; only receipted fuel expenses will be reimbursed. Further, if using a District-provided vehicle, the employee will ensure that the vehicle is adequately fueled prior to leaving the District.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



APPROVAL DATE	FINANCE POLICIES	POLICY NO.
APPROVED BY: Board of Directors	POLICY TITLE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES	EFFECTIVE DATE

The District will not reimburse for alcoholic beverages. Receipts are required to obtain reimbursement for actual costs.

- 6) Lodging: Lodging expenses will be reimbursed or paid for when travel on District business reasonably requires an overnight stay. Pre-event lodging will not be provided when such lodging is for the convenience of the employee unless approved by the Department Head. Unless approved by the General Manager, overnight lodging will only be approved when the activity is greater than 50 miles (one-way) from both the District and the employee's residence. Additional days will also be considered to accommodate reduced airfare.

Conferences/Meetings. Lodging shall be obtained at the most economical rate available for good quality lodging. If such lodging is in connection with a conference, lodging expenses must not exceed the group rate published by the conference sponsor for the meeting in question if such rates are available at the time of booking. If the group rate is not available, see next section Other Lodging. When certain meals are provided at a conference or meeting, they are considered part of the event cost. A per-diem meal is not chargeable to the District when corresponding meals are provided.

Other Lodging. Travelers must request government rates, when available. A listing of hotels offering governmental rates in different areas is available on common travel Web sites. Lodging rates that are equal to or less than government rates are presumed to be reasonable and hence reimbursable for purposes of this policy.

In the event that government rates are not available at a particular time or in a particular area, rates that do not exceed the lodging allowance for the destination city published by the General Services Administration (GSA), exclusive of taxes and mandatory charges, are considered reasonable. An IRS Accountable Plan allows payment of fixed amounts to cover the daily cost of meals and lodging as an alternative to reimbursing for the actual amount of the expenditure. Amounts exceeding the GSA rates for the destination are

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



APPROVAL DATE	FINANCE POLICIES	POLICY NO.
APPROVED BY: Board of Directors	POLICY TITLE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES	EFFECTIVE DATE

- 4) A District credit card, or District check should be used/requested by the employee whenever possible, including for expenses such as registration fees, air travel, and lodging. If an employee wants to pay for these types of items with their own credit card (or other means), and then expects to get reimbursed, then that employee must first obtain approval from their Department Head, or designee, in addition to all other necessary approvals.
- 5) Before travel is to take place, the employee must obtain approval from their supervisor, and/or Department Head, and/or the General Manager if appropriate.

B. Methods of payment are the following:

- 1) District Credit Card: The District credit card should not be used for personal expenses, even if the employee subsequently reimburses the District. Please see the policy regarding the use of District credit cards for appropriate use and accountability surrounding usage of the District's credit card.
- 2) District Issued Check: A regular check processed to pay a vendor for trip expenses before departure or after the employee's return. This check gets mailed to the vendor or can be requested for pick-up. The request for a regular check should be submitted with enough time for the check to be processed for the time needed.

C. While Traveling:

- 1) Good Judgement: When an employee completes the expense reimbursement form, they are expressing that they understand which expenses have already been paid and which ones are eligible for reimbursement. Employees are expected to exercise good judgement in the type of expenses incurred while traveling.
- 2) Planning for Reimbursement: Reimbursement is based on proof of payment. Receipts, invoices and other types of documentation will be required for obtaining reimbursement. Therefore, employees must plan accordingly.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



APPROVAL DATE	FINANCE POLICIES	POLICY NO.
APPROVED BY: Board of Directors	POLICY TITLE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES	EFFECTIVE DATE

Violation of this Policy

Use of public resources or falsifying expense reports in violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following: 1) loss of future reimbursement privileges, 2) a demand for restitution, 3) disciplinary action; 4) reporting unreimbursed expenses as income to federal and state taxing agencies, and 5) Reporting misuse of public resources to legal authorities.

William Fox, Chief Financial Officer Date

John Thiel, General Manager Date

EXHIBIT B

EXHIBIT C

Federal Government Table for Per Diem - Meals and Incidentals Guidelines
 Effective Date: October 1, 2024

Primary Destination	County	Meals & Incidentals	Meals & Incidentals				First & Last Day of Travel	
			Totals	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner		Expenses
Standard Rate	Applies for all locations without specified rates		\$68	\$16	\$19	\$28	\$5	\$51.00
Antioch / Brentwood / Concord	Contra Costa		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Bakersfield / Ridgecrest	Kern		\$74	\$18	\$20	\$31	\$5	\$55.50
Barstow / Ontario / Victorville	San Bernardino		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Death Valley	Inyo / NAWA China Lake		\$80	\$20	\$22	\$33	\$5	\$60.00
Eureka / Arcata / McKinleyville	Humboldt		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Fresno	Fresno		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Los Angeles	Los Angeles / Orange / Ventura		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Mammoth Lakes	Mono		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Mill Valley / San Rafael / Novato	Marin		\$92	\$23	\$26	\$38	\$5	\$69.00
Monterey	Monterey		\$92	\$23	\$26	\$38	\$5	\$69.00
Napa	Napa		\$92	\$23	\$26	\$38	\$5	\$69.00
Oakhurst	Madera		\$80	\$20	\$22	\$33	\$5	\$60.00
Oakland	Alameda		\$92	\$23	\$26	\$38	\$5	\$69.00
Palm Springs	Riverside		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Point Arena / Gualala	Mendocino		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Sacramento	Sacramento		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
San Diego	San Diego		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
San Francisco	San Francisco		\$92	\$23	\$26	\$38	\$5	\$69.00
San Luis Obispo	San Luis Obispo		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
San Mateo / Foster City / Belmont	San Mateo		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara		\$92	\$23	\$26	\$38	\$5	\$69.00
Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Santa Monica	City limits of Santa Monica		\$92	\$23	\$26	\$38	\$5	\$69.00
Santa Rosa	Sonoma		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
South Lake Tahoe	El Dorado		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Stockton	San Joaquin		\$74	\$18	\$20	\$31	\$5	\$55.50
Sunnyvale / Palo Alto / San Jose	Santa Clara		\$92	\$23	\$26	\$38	\$5	\$69.00
Tahoe City	Placer		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Truckee	Nevada		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50
Visalia	Tulare		\$80	\$20	\$22	\$33	\$5	\$60.00
West Sacramento / Davis	Yolo		\$80	\$20	\$22	\$33	\$5	\$60.00
Yosemite National Park	Mariposa		\$86	\$22	\$23	\$36	\$5	\$64.50

EXHIBIT D



**Travel and Expense
Reimbursements Survey
For
Policy Review & Oversight Committee
August 2024**

OVERVIEW

- West Valley Water District commissioned travel and expense reimbursements
- 13 local agencies, including West Valley Water District, were solicited
 - There were 12 responses, including WVWD
 - There was only 1 district that did not respond
- Survey topics include:
 - Authorizations
 - Approvals
 - Travel and reimbursement policy
 - Expense reporting handling for Board and employees
- Survey Conclusions
- Next Steps

AGENCIES PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY



12 Agencies:

- ✓ Coachella Valley Water District
- ✓ Cucamonga Valley Water District
- ✓ East Valley Water District
- ✓ Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District
- ✓ Lake Arrowhead Community Svcs. District
- ✓ Mesa Water District
- ✓ Rubidoux Community Services District
- ✓ Yucaipa Valley Water District
- ✓ Walnut Valley Water District
- ✓ Western Municipal Water District
- ✓ Walnut Valley Water District
- ✓ **West Valley Water District**

TIMING OF AUTHORIZATION OF TRAVEL & OTHER BUSINESS EXPENSES

Agency Name	Expenses Authorized in Advance	Expenses Not Authorized in Advance	Expenses Ratified After the Fact with Approval for Payment
Coachella Valley Water District	X		
Cucamonga Valley Water District	X		X
East Valley Water District	X		X
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District	X		
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Svcs. District	X		
Mesa Water District	X		X
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	X		
Yorba Linda Water District	X		X
Yucaipa Valley Water District	X		
Western Municipal Water District	X		X
Walnut Valley Water District		X	X
West Valley Water District	X		X
Totals	11	1	6

TIMING OF SUBMISSION OF EXPENSE REPORTS

Agency Name	Monthly	After an Event or Conference	Comments Received
Coachella Valley Water District		X	
Cucamonga Valley Water District		X	
East Valley Water District	X		
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District		X	
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Svcs. District		X	
Mesa Water District		X	No set deadline
Rubidoux Community Services District		X	
Yorba Linda Water District		X	
Yucaipa Valley Water District		X	
Western Municipal Water District		X	Within 30 Days upon return
Walnut Valley Water District		X	Within 30 Days upon return
West Valley Water District		X	Within 30 Days upon return
Totals	I	II	

POLICY CONTAINS A LIST OF QUALIFIED AND UNQUALIFIED EXPENSES FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Agency Name	Policy Provides a List of Qualified Expenses	Policy Provides a List of Non-Qualified Expenses	Policy Provides a List of Expenses	Policy Does Not Provide Any List of Expenses
Coachella Valley Water District	X		X	
Cucamonga Valley Water District				X
East Valley Water District	X		X	
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water Dist.	X		X	
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Svcs. District				X
Mesa Water District	X		X	
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	X		X	
Yorba Linda Water District	X		X	
Yucaipa Valley Water District				X
Western Municipal Water District				X
Walnut Valley Water District	X		X	
West Valley Water District	X		X	
Totals	8		8	4

USE OF A RENTAL CAR WHILE OF TRAVEL STATUS

Agency Name	Yes	No	Comments
Coachella Valley Water District	X		When no other options are available or practicable
Cucamonga Valley Water District	X		Any occasion where appropriate
East Valley Water District	X		Staff only
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District	X		When it is a business necessity
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Services District	X		
Mesa Water District	X		When a necessity and outside of the County
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	X		
Yorba Linda Water District	X		
Yucaipa Valley Water District	X		Geographical requirement, no other transportation available, & most economical mode
Western Municipal Water District	X		Geographical requirement, no other transportation available, & most economical mode
Walnut Valley Water District	X		
West Valley Water District	X		Staff and Board when a necessity
Totals	12	0	7

RESPONSIBILITY FOR BOOKING FLIGHTS & CONFERENCES, & LODGING

Agency Name	Employee	Board Secretary	Human Resources	GM's Office Admin. Staff	Employee's Department
Coachella Valley Water District					X
Cucamonga Valley Water District	X	X			X
East Valley Water District		X			X
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District				X	
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Services District	X				
Mesa Water District	X			X	X
Rubidoux Comm. Services District			X		
Yorba Linda Water District	X	X			X
Yucaipa Valley Water District			X		
Western Municipal Water District	X	X			
Walnut Valley Water District			X		X
West Valley Water District	X	X		X	X
Totals	6	5	3	2	7

FOLLOWING THE IRS RECEIPT COMPLIANCE WHERE EXPENSES UNDER \$75 DO NOT REQUIRE RETENTION

Agency Name	IRS Receipt Guideline Is Followed	District Policy Requires All Receipts
Coachella Valley Water District	X	
Cucamonga Valley Water District		X
East Valley Water District		X
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District		X
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Services District		X
Mesa Water District	X	
Rubidoux Comm. Services District		X
Yorba Linda Water District		X
Yucaipa Valley Water District		X
Western Municipal Water District		X
Walnut Valley Water District		X
West Valley Water District		X
Totals	2	10

LODGING ARRANGEMENTS ARE HANDLED IN ADVANCE OF AN EVENT OR CONFERENCE

Agency Name	Lodging Done In Advance	Lodging Done At the Discretion of the Traveler	Done Upon Arrival at the Event
Coachella Valley Water District	X		
Cucamonga Valley Water District	X		
East Valley Water District	X		
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District	X		
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Services District	X		
Mesa Water District	X		
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	X		
Yorba Linda Water District	X		
Yucaipa Valley Water District	X		
Western Municipal Water District	X		
Walnut Valley Water District	X		
West Valley Water District	X		
Totals	12	0	0

10

EXPENSE GUIDELINES FOLLOWED FOR LODGING COSTS

Agency Name	IRS Guideline	GSA Guideline	District Policy	Comments
Coachella Valley Water District			X	Utilize government rates when it is available
Cucamonga Valley Water District		X		
East Valley Water District			X	
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water Dist.			X	
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Svcs. Dist.	X			
Mesa Water District			X	
Rubidoux Comm. Services District		X		
Yorba Linda Water District		X		
Yucaipa Valley Water District		X		
Western Municipal Water District			X	
Walnut Valley Water District			X	
West Valley Water District		X		
Totals	1	5	6	

MAKING PAYMENTS FOR ATTENDING CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

Agency Name	Prepay in Advance	No Established Payment Policy	Employee Handles Timing of Payment
Coachella Valley Water District	X		
Cucamonga Valley Water District	X		
East Valley Water District	X		
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water Dist.	X		
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Svcs. Dist.	X		
Mesa Water District	X		
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	X		
Yorba Linda Water District	X		
Yucaipa Valley Water District	X		
Western Municipal Water District	X		
Walnut Valley Water District		X	
West Valley Water District	X		
Totals	11	1	0

12

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT FOR ELIGIBLE MILES DRIVEN

Agency Name	Follows IRS Reimbursement Guidelines	District Sets Mileage Reimbursement Rate
Coachella Valley Water District	X	
Cucamonga Valley Water District	X	
East Valley Water District	X	
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water Dist.	X	
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Svcs. Dist.	X	
Mesa Water District	X	
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	X	
Yorba Linda Water District	X	
Yucaipa Valley Water District	X	
Western Municipal Water District	X	
Walnut Valley Water District	X	
West Valley Water District	X	
Totals	12	0

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES FOR REVIEWING BOARD MEMBERS TRAVEL AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

Agency Name	Board Secretary	General Manager	Finance Director	Other Approvers (Specify)
Coachella Valley Water District	X	X	X	
Cucamonga Valley Water District	X		X	
East Valley Water District	X			
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water Dist.		X		Board President
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Svcs. Dist.			X	
Mesa Water District				2 Board Members
Rubidoux Comm. Services District		X	X	
Yorba Linda Water District	X		X	Board President
Yucaipa Valley Water District		X		
Western Municipal Water District	X	X	X	
Walnut Valley Water District	X	X	X	
West Valley Water District	X	X	X	Board President
Totals	7	7	8	

USE OF A STANDARD EXPENSE REPORT FORM TRAVEL AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Agency Name	One Form Used District-Wide	Board Has A Separate Form	Comments Received
Coachella Valley Water District	X	X	Nature of expenses are different
Cucamonga Valley Water District		X	Board Policy has meeting stipends
East Valley Water District		X	Separate Board Policy done by ordinance
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District		X	Subtle differences per Admin. Code
Lake Arrowhead Comm. Svcs. District	X		
Mesa Water District	X		
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	X		
Yorba Linda Water District		X	Reimbursement rates are similar.
Yucaipa Valley Water District	X		
Western Municipal Water District		X	Separate Board Policy done by ordinance
Walnut Valley Water District		X	Approval process is different
West Valley Water District		X	Separate Board Policy done by ordinance
Totals	4	8	

15

SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

- 11 out of 12 Agencies authorize expenses in advance.
- 6 out of 12 Agencies also ratify expenses after the fact if initial authorization was not previously obtained.
- **West Valley Water District authorizes expenses in advance and ratifies expenses after the fact.**
- 11 out of the 12 require submission of expense reports after an event or conference.
- 1 Agency only requires expense reports to be completed monthly.
- 3 Agencies commented that expense reports need to be completed within 30 days upon return.
- **West Valley Water District requires expenses report to be completed upon returned from a trip.**
- 8 out of 12 Agencies provide a list of Allowable and Not-Allowable expenses for reimbursement
- 4 out of 12 Agencies do not provide lists of Allowable and Not-Allowable expenses in their policy.
- **West Valley's proposed procedure provides lists of both Allowable and Not-Allowable expenses.**
- 12 out of 12 Agencies allow use of a rental car while on travel status.
- 8 out of 12 Agencies provided feedback that rental cars are used in cases of operational necessity.
- **West Valley Water District limits the use of rental cars to operational necessity.**

SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

- 11 out of 12 Agencies delegate the responsibility for booking flights, lodging and conferences to various portions of their Agency.
- 1 Agency centralized the handling of travel and conference activity to the General Manager's Office.
- **West Valley Water District delegates responsibility to the employee, Board Secretary, General Manager Staff, and employee's department who all can make the travel arrangements.**
- 10 out of 12 Agencies require that all expenses submitted for reimbursement must have a receipt.
- 2 Agencies have chosen to follow the IRS guideline where expenses are not required for items under \$75.
- **West Valley Water District requires that submitted expenses must have a supporting receipt.**
- 11 out of the 12 require Agencies submit expense reports after an event or conference.
- 1 Agency requires expense reports to be done monthly.
- 3 Agencies commented that expense reports need to be completed within 30 days upon return.
- **West Valley Water District requires expense report to be completed within 30 days upon return.**
- 12 out of 12 Agencies require lodging arrangements be done in advance of an event or conference.
- **West Valley Water District proposed procedure mirrors this best practice.**

SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

- 12 out of 12 Agencies have guidelines for lodging expenses.
 - 6 Agencies have adopted their own District policy separate from government guidelines
 - 6 Agencies follow either the GSA or IRS guidelines.
 - **West Valley Water District proposed policy follows GSA guidelines.**
- 11 out of 12 Agencies require that payments be made in advance for conferences and seminars.
 - 1 Agency reported they have no established payment policy requirement
 - **West Valley Water District proposed policy follows best practice of making payments in advance.**
- 12 out of 12 Agencies follow mileage reimbursement following the IRS established rate.
 - **West Valley Water District's current policy and proposed policy follow this best practice.**

SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

- 11 out of 12 Agencies have more than one approving party for Board Members travel and expense reimbursements
 - 7 of 12 Agencies utilize the Board Secretary
 - 7 of 12 Agencies utilize the General Manager
 - 8 of 12 Agencies utilize the Finance Director
 - 4 of 12 Agencies utilize Board Members
 - **West Valley Water District has four approvers. This includes the Board Secretary, General Manager, Chief Financial Officer and Board President. This is a thorough approach but could be considered more than necessary.**
- 12 out of 12 Agencies have standard expense report forms for travel and expense reimbursement.
 - 4 Districts have one district-wide expense report form for employees and Board Members.
 - 8 Districts have separate expense report forms for Board members and Board Members.
 - **West Valley Water District has separate expense report forms for employees and Board Members.**

NEXT STEPS

- Incorporate input obtained from the Policy Review and Oversight Committee.
- Meet with the Finance Committee for input and comment on Survey and proposed policy.
- Present proposed travel and expense report policy to Board for approval.
- Provide and discuss newly adopted travel and expense policy with employees at an All-Hands Staff Meeting.



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
POLICY REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

DATE: October 15, 2024
TO: Policy Review and Oversight Committee
FROM: William Fox, Interim Chief Financial Officer
SUBJECT: TURF REBATE SURVEY

BACKGROUND:

The District currently has a Turf Rebate Program that provides an incentive to residential and commercial customers for their landscape projects where turf is being removed and replaced with drought tolerant plants, artificial turf, and hardscape. Due to increasing conservation efforts being mandated by the State of California, along with limited available funding, it was determined that a survey be conducted to examine how other surrounding agencies are addressing their Turf Rebate Program. A total of seventeen agencies, including West Valley Water District, were solicited. There were a total of ten survey submissions received. Seven agencies responded that they do not have a turf rebate program due to there being no available funding.

DISCUSSION:

The survey covered several elements of a Turf Rebate Program. Comparisons were developed on cost per square foot reimbursed, project dollar caps, and number of submissions allowed per year for both residential and commercial customers. The use of artificial turf as an acceptable replacement for turf and the minimum % of living plants required in a replacement project were examined. The inspection process was reviewed to determine whether physical inspections are done prior to starting the project and upon completion. Project completion was examined to verify the length of time a customer is given to complete the project and whether an extension is available, if additional time is needed. Funding sources were examined to ascertain how agencies obtain program funding. Agencies that are part of the Metropolitan Water District water system obtain funding through them. Non-Metropolitan agencies require funding through their own water rates, wholesale water agency, and grants.

Attached for review and discussion is the benchmark survey conducted.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct financial impact of the Turf Rebate Survey submission. However, from an operational perspective, the results reveal that the District will need to make certain decisions and take certain actions in order to have sufficient funding to meet anticipated customer increased demand for funds related to conservation efforts.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the survey be reviewed and discussed with the Policy Review & Oversight Committee and then forwarded to the Finance Committee for further review and evaluation. Upon completion of the Finance Committee review, the matter will be addressed as part of the grant pursuit process and incorporated in the water rate study and long-range financial plan that is currently underway.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Exhibit A - Turf Rebate Survey - October 15 2024

EXHIBIT A



Turf Rebate Survey For Policy Review & Oversight Committee October 15, 2024

OVERVIEW

- **West Valley Water District** commissioned a survey to examine turf rebates provided by other local agencies
- **17 local agencies, including West Valley Water District, were solicited**
 - **There were 10 participating agencies, including WVWD**
 - **There were 7 agencies declining to participate as they don't have a Turf Rebate Program**
- **Survey topics include:**
 - **Program rebate amounts**
 - **Artificial Turf and % of living plants requirements**
 - **Inspections**
 - **Time to complete project**
 - **Agency funding amounts and source of funds**
- **Survey Conclusions**
- **Next Steps**

AGENCIES SOLICITED

10 Agencies:

- ✓ City of Colton - Water Utility
- ✓ City of Rialto – Water Department
- ✓ Coachella Valley Water District
- ✓ Cucamonga Valley Water District
- ✓ Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District
- ✓ Monte Vista Water District
- ✓ Rubidoux Community Services District
- ✓ Walnut Valley Water District
- ✓ Western Municipal Water District
- ✓ **West Valley Water District**



Participating Agencies

7 Agencies:

- ✓ City of Redlands – Water Dept.
- ✓ East Valley Water District
- ✓ Fontana Water
- ✓ Jurupa Community Services District
- ✓ Rialto Water Services
- ✓ Yucaipa Valley Water District
- ✓ Lake Arrowhead Comm. Services District



Non-Participating Agencies

RESIDENTIAL TURF REBATE PROGRAM AMOUNTS

Agency Name	\$ Per Square Foot Residential Rebate	Total Dollar Cap Per Submission	Can More Than One Rebate Be Submitted Per Year
City of Colton Water Utility	\$2.00	\$800	No
City of Rialto Water Department	\$1.00	\$1,000	Yes
Coachella Valley Water District	\$2.00	\$20,000	Yes
Cucamonga Valley Water District	\$2.00	\$10,000	No
Elsinore Valley Muni. Water Dist.	\$2.25	\$11,250	No
Monte Vista Water District	\$3.00	\$10,000	Yes
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	\$2.00	\$10,000	Yes
Walnut Valley Water District	\$3.00	\$10,000	Yes
Western Municipal Water District	\$6.00	\$18,000	No
West Valley Water District	\$1.00	No Cap	Yes
Totals	2.42 Avg.	\$10,117	6 Yes, 4 No

COMMERCIAL TURF REBATE PROGRAM AMOUNTS

Agency Name	\$ Per Sq Foot Commercial Rebate	Total Dollar Cap Per Submission	Can More Than One Rebate Be Submitted Per Year
City of Colton Water Utility	\$2.00	\$4300	No
City of Rialto Water Department	None	None	Not Applicable
Coachella Valley Water District	\$2.00	\$50,000	Yes
Cucamonga Valley Water District	\$2.00	\$100,000	No
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water Dist.	\$2.00	\$100,000	No
Monte Vista Water District	\$2.00	\$100,000	Yes
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	\$2.00	\$10,000	Yes
Walnut Valley Water District	\$4.00	\$100,000	Yes
Western Municipal Water District	\$6.00	\$165,000	No
West Valley Water District	\$1.00	No Cap	Yes
Totals	\$2.56	\$78,663	5 Yes, 4 No, 1 NA

5

USE OF ARTIFICIAL TURF & MINIMUM PERCENTAGE OF PLANTS REQUIRED

Agency Name	Artificial Turf Qualifies for Rebate Program	Minimum % of Living Plants Required	What is Minimum Percentage of Living Plants Required
City of Colton Water Utility	No	Yes	Based upon Zone
City of Rialto Water Department	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Coachella Valley Water District	Yes	Yes	25% of area
Cucamonga Valley Water District	No	Yes	3 plants/100 sq. ft.
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water Dist.	No	Yes	3 plants/100 sq. ft.
Monte Vista Water District	No	Yes	3 plants/100 sq. ft.
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	No	Yes	Not Specified
Walnut Valley Water District	No	Yes	3 plants/100 sq. ft.
Western Municipal Water District	No	Yes	3 plants/100 sq. ft.
West Valley Water District	Yes	Yes	33% of area
Totals	3 Yes, 7 No	9 Yes, 1 No	Varies

INSPECTIONS

Agency Name	Area Inspected	Area Inspected	Photos or Drawings
	Prior to Project Approval	After Project Completion	Acceptable In Lieu of Physical Inspection
City of Colton Water Utility	Yes	Yes	No
City of Rialto Water Department	No	Yes	Before Approval Only
Coachella Valley Water District	Yes	Yes	No
Cucamonga Valley Water District	No	No	Photos Before & After
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water Dist.	No	No	Photos Before & After
Monte Vista Water District	No	Yes	Photos Before Only
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	Yes	Yes	Photos are acceptable
Walnut Valley Water District	No	Yes	Inspect Final Project
Western Municipal Water District	No	No	Photos are acceptable
West Valley Water District	Yes	Yes	No
Totals	4 Yes, 6 No	7 Yes, 3 No	

PROJECT COMPLETION AND EXTENSIONS

Agency Name	Duration to Complete Project	Can Extensions Be Obtained	Additional Comments
City of Colton Water Utility	120 Days	Yes	
City of Rialto Water Department	Not Specified	Not Specified	
Coachella Valley Water District	90 Days	Yes	
Cucamonga Valley Water District	180 Days	Yes	
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water Dist.	180 Days	Yes	
Monte Vista Water District	180 Days	Yes	MWD Discretion
Rubidoux Comm. Services District	180 Days	Yes	
Walnut Valley Water District	180 Days	Unknown	
Western Municipal Water District	180 Days	Yes	
West Valley Water District	180 Days	Yes	
Totals	163 Days	8 Yes, 2 Unknown	

TURF REPLACEMENT BUDGET AND FUNDING SOURCES

Agency Name	2024 Annual Budget	Source of Funding	Additional Comments
City of Colton Water Utility	\$40,000	Customer Rates	City Runs Program
City of Rialto Water Department	\$50,000	Grants	City Runs Program
Coachella Valley Water District	\$2,500,000	Customer Rates	District Runs Program
Cucamonga Valley Water District	Not Provided	MWD Funds	MWD Runs Program
Elsinore Valley Muni. Water Dist.	\$50,000	MWD Funds	MWD Runs Program
Monte Vista Water District	Not Provided	MWD Funds	MWD Runs program
Rubidoux Comm. Svcs. District	Not Provided	MWD Funds	MWD runs program
Walnut Valley Water District	Not Provided	MWD Funds	MWD runs program
Western Municipal Water District	\$450,000	MWD, Grants	MWD Primarily
West Valley Water District	\$96,000	SB Valley Water Dist.	District Runs Program

SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

- **West Valley Water District's residential rebate program is less generous when compared to surveyed agencies.**
 - **Surveyed residential reimbursement per square foot is \$2.42 versus \$1.**
 - **Other agencies place a cap on rebates at an average of \$10,117 versus no reimbursement cap in place for West Valley Water District.**
- **West Valley Water District's commercial rebate program is less generous when compared to surveyed agencies.**
 - **Surveyed commercial cost per square foot is \$2.56 versus \$1.**
 - **Other agencies place a cap on rebates at an average of \$78,663 per customer versus no reimbursement cap in West Valley Water District.**
- **Artificial turf qualifying for the rebate is not widely acceptable in the agencies surveyed.**
 - **7 out of 10 agencies do not provide rebates for artificial turf installation.**
 - **West Valley Water District is only one of three agencies that provide a rebate.**
- **Rebates require that a portion of the area incorporate the use of drought tolerant plants.**
 - **5 of the 10 agencies require 3 drought tolerant plants be installed for every 100 square feet.**
 - **3 agencies did not specify percentage requirements for plants.**
 - **1 agency required 25% of the area have plants installed.**
 - **West Valley Water District requires 33% of the area be covered with drought tolerant plants.**

SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

- **Inspections are a form of verification of the project area subject to receiving rebates.**
 - **4 out of the 10 agencies perform a site survey of the project area before starting a project.**
 - **6 out of the 10 agencies rely upon plans submitted and/or photographs.**
 - **West Valley performs a physical inspection and measurement prior to the commencement of the project rather than relying on customer provided information.**

- **Inspections at the conclusion of the project is considered a best practice.**
 - **7 out of 10 agencies perform a final inspection before releasing funds.**
 - **West Valley follows best practice and performs an inspection prior to releasing funds.**

- **Project completion times from an initial approval to completion vary but tend to allow several months.**
 - **7 out of 10 agencies surveyed allow 180 days to complete the project**
 - **West Valley Water District allows 180 days to complete the project**

- **Customers often require a need for an extension to complete their project.**
 - **8 out of the 10 agencies allow for an extension, if one is requested.**
 - **West Valley Water District does allow an extension upon written request.**

||

SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

- **Funding Sources of the turf rebate program vary.**
 - **Agencies within MWD service territory receive necessary funding from MWD. Some also pursue grants to augment the amounts available.**
 - **MWD runs the administrative portion of the work for their member agencies.**

- **Non-MWD agencies must generate funds for their turf rebate and other conservation programs.**
 - **Funding is developed as part of the water rates.**
 - **Grant funding.**

- **Funding obtained from San Bernardino Valley Water District was \$96,000 this year.**
 - **This level of funding by itself will not be sufficient in the future to meet increased demands of State imposed unfunded conservation requirements.**
 - **Additional efforts to obtain grant funds and solicitation of San Bernardino Valley Water District will be pursued.**
 - **The implementation of the new water rates will incorporate a component for conservation.**

NEXT STEPS

- **Incorporate input obtained from the Policy Review and Oversight Committee.**
- **Meet with the Finance Committee for input and comment on Survey.**
- **Develop approved changes to the Turf Rebate Program.**
- **Pursue grant funding for additional conservation opportunities.**
- **Approach San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District for additional funding in light of increased demands by the State of California.**
- **Incorporate the conservation component into the Water Rate Study. Further discuss desired level of funds needed to determine funding requirement.**