



MAYOR BOB FOSTER

CITY OF LONG BEACH

October 7, 2013

Mark Cowin, Director
Department of Water Resources
1416 - 9th Street, Room 1115-1
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Gateway Water Management Authority – IRWMP Grants

Dear Director Cowin:

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write to express concern regarding the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) recommended Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) grant awards. It appears the recommended funding fails to include even a single project within the Gateway Authority, of which Long Beach is a member, while fully meeting the needs of other IRWMPs in the Los Angeles/Ventura funding region.

Of the applications recommended for funding, four applications actually received lower scores than the Gateway Authority. The Santa Ana Watershed is recommended for \$8.8 million, but scored 42 out of 80, while the Gateway Authority's application scored 51 out of 80 and is slated to receive zero grant funding.

The Department of Water Resources evaluation sheets recognize Gateway Authority's economical and valuable projects. In particular, the "Catch Basin Trash Inserts and Face Plate Screens" project proposes to retrofit catch basins in 13 cities along the lower Los Angeles River, San Gabriel River, and Los Cerritos Channel. The Gateway Authority is experienced in this type of retrofit. An earlier federally funded project, in conjunction with the State Water Quality Control Board, enabled the Gateway Authority to install 12,000 full-capture trash device screens in 16 cities. The recent application for IRWMP funding would extend this successful effort to 13 additional cities. Long Beach has seen noticeable improvements in recreational water quality at our beaches as a result of this and other regional projects to improve stormwater management.

Noticeably missing in DWR's evaluation of the Gateway Authority's application is recognition of the projects' benefits to Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) within the

region. IRWMP grant guidelines clearly state, it is a statewide priority to ensure an equitable distribution of benefits through funding applications that increase participation from small and disadvantaged communities, as well as, multi-benefit projects with consideration to disadvantaged communities. Many areas within the Gateway Authority's region are considered Disadvantaged Communities by DWR. Unfortunately, the recommended awards fail to reflect an investment in disadvantaged Gateway communities.

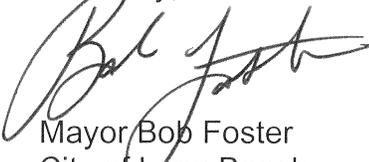
It appears the awards are made on a "pay to play basis", as "shovel ready" projects that have a high percentage of matching funds are being recommended for grant funding over valuable and economical projects in disadvantaged communities that may not be able to put forth the higher match amount. This is an inappropriate way to implement water policy, and results in the exclusion of disadvantaged communities from the IRWMP program. DWR's failure to recommend funding for projects that benefit DACs in the Gateway Authority clearly demonstrates this point.

Attached for your information, are two maps that demonstrate DWR's recommended funding inequities. The first map shows DAC areas, as defined by DWR within the Gateway Authority's jurisdiction. The second map shows DWR's draft IRWMP funding recommendations. If the two maps are overlaid, it becomes clear that every southern California coastal region is slated to receive IRWMP grants, with the exception of the Gateway Authority, despite the fact that funding to other areas in coastal southern California does not benefit DACs.

It is concerning that DWR has failed to consider project benefits to Disadvantaged Communities within the Gateway Authority through the IRWMP grant award process. There is an enormous need for IRWMP funding in the Gateway region, and cost-benefit evaluations by DWR have noted the Gateway Authority has proposed projects that are valuable and economical. The benefits of these projects can only be realized if funding is awarded.

Given these reasons, I urge you to allocate IRWMP grant funds to the Gateway Authority.

Sincerely,



Mayor Bob Foster
City of Long Beach