CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION

FROM: Josette Descalzo, Environmental Compliance & Sustainability Manager

DATE: March 12, 2015

SUBJECT: Low Impact Development (LID) requirement per the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Municipal Storm Water and Urban Runoff Discharges within Los Angeles County and the Incorporated Cities (MS4) Permit

ATTACHMENTS: None

INTRODUCTION

Pollutant storm water runoff is a leading cause of water quality impairment in the Los Angeles Region. Storm water and urban runoff are often contaminated with pesticides, fertilizers, animal droppings, trash, food wastes, automotive by-products and many other toxic substances generated by our urban environment. Water that flows over streets, parking lots, construction sites, industrial, commercial, residential and municipal areas carry these untreated pollutants through storm drain networks directly into the waters of the Los Angeles Region. These networks of storm drains are known as the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4).

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), through its National Urban Runoff Program (NURP) study, showed that MS4 discharges contain significant amounts of pollutants draining towards the waters of the Los Angeles Region, reducing the beneficial uses of its waters and threatening the health of aquatic life. Based on these findings and the federal Clean Water Act (CWA), the California State Water Resource Control Board – Los Angeles Region (Regional Board) issued Los Angeles County and its incorporated cities, excluding the City of Long Beach (Permitee), a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, also known as the LA County MS4 permit, to improve the quality of storm water and urban runoff.

DISCUSSION

Currently, Los Angeles County and its incorporated cities (Permitees) are complying with the requirements of the 2012 LA County MS4 Permit. In this permit, the Permitees are broken down to Watersheds Management Areas (WMAs) where they are responsible to meet water quality objectives in their own watersheds. These water quality objectives are also referred to as Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs).

The City of Beverly Hills belongs to the Ballona Creek watershed where the City is required to meet the water quality objectives written in the Ballona Creek Trash TMDL, Bacteria TMDL and Metals and Toxics TMDL.

In order to meet these TMDL limits, the City and other Co-Permitees are required to implement the following programs prescribed in the MS4 permit:

1. Public Information and Participation (PIPP) – Educational Program
2. Industrial/Commercial Facilities Control Program
3. Development Planning Program
4. Development Construction Program
5. Public Agency Activities Program
6. Illicit Connections and Illicit Discharges Elimination Program

The City of Beverly Hills, as a Co-Permitee, has implemented these programs and will be updating each program's elements, as necessary, to comply with the 2012 LA County MS4 Permit.

Since the City of Beverly Hills is predominantly a residential and commercial community, the Development Planning Program is a key program that can be used to meet water quality objectives. This program focuses on preventing pollutants that could be generated from new and redevelopment projects by implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) in each individual project site. Strategies, such as Low Impact Development (LID), have been known to be very effective in meeting this objective. Hence, LID is a required element in the Development Planning Program of the LA County MS4 permit.

LID is a storm water management strategy that seeks to mitigate the impacts of increases in runoff and storm water pollution close to its source. LID is a set of site design approaches and Best Management Practices (BMPs) that promote natural system for infiltration, evapotranspiration and use of storm water. LID is geared towards mimicking the site's pre-developed conditions by minimizing surface area that produces large amounts of runoff and does not allow water to infiltrate into the ground. Where infiltration is infeasible, the use of bioretention, rain gardens, vegetated rooftops and rain barrels that will store, evaporate, detain, and/or treat runoff can be used to attain LID. These LID Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been known to effectively remove bacteria and metals pollutants from storm water runoff while reducing the volume and storm water flow to the storm drain conveyance system that eventually drains to a water body.

In order to comply with the 2012 LA County MS4 Permit and the water quality objectives written in the Ballona Creek TMDLs, staff will be developing a LID Ordinance for adoption by City Council by June 2015. Staff will be present at the March 12 Commission Meeting to review this item and to answer any questions.