City of Dallas
Environmental Education Initiative

Quality of Life Committee
September 26, 2005
Dallas Water Utilities & Sanitation Services
Briefing Purpose

- Provide background on in-school educational efforts
- Highlights
  - DWU Water Conservation Program
  - SAN Recycling Education Program
- Introduce Environmental Education Initiative (EEI)
- Seek committee support for contract award on September 28, 2005 Council Agenda for 3 year contract (subject to annual appropriations)
BACKGROUND: In-School Educational Efforts

- Many departments provide support to schools by request only
- More structured programs tailored to school districts specific needs
  - Efforts often perceived by school officials as additional work for teachers
- Not always aligned with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) requirements
HIGHLIGHTS: DWU Water Conservation Program

- Existing In-school Program Chronology
  - Mid-1980’s to Present
    - Drinking Water Week Poster Contest
    - Speaking Engagements
    - Participation in Special Events & Community Fairs
    - Book covers & Promotional Items
  - FY 2003
    - Education efforts expanded to include Summer outreach programming in YMCA’s and City Recreation Centers
April 2005

- Water Conservation Five-year Strategic Plan adopted by Council to include enhanced education and outreach component
  - Five-year Plan specifies development and implementation of K-12 bi-lingual water conservation curriculum for City of Dallas students
  - As a result of Council’s commitment to water conservation and the Five-year Plan, funding was included in the FY 04-05 budget for development and implementation of in-school water education programming
HIGHLIGHTS:
Water Conservation Program (cont.)

- Actions taken during and since adoption of Five-year Strategic Plan
  - Staff evaluated local, regional, state and national water education resources available
    - Examples of programs evaluated include
      - Texas Water Development Board’s “Major Rivers”
      - EPA Water Education Programs
      - Various Municipal Water Education Websites
      - Non-profit Organizations
      - Private Companies
HIGHLIGHTS:
Water Conservation Program (cont.)

● Lessons Learned
  ● School education programs, while not directly related to an equipment change, may result in both short and long-term water savings
  ● Behavioral changes by the students based upon greater knowledge are often shared with parents and implemented at home
  ● To be effective, a school education program should provide curriculum material appropriate to the grade level of the student, increasing in complexity from elementary school through high school
  ● A water oriented curriculum that is focused on conservation and resource issues should be made available for all grades
HIGHLIGHTS:
SAN Recycling Education Program

- Mayor’s Recycling Task Force in May 2003:
  - Encourage partnerships to integrate recycling across City Departments
  - Implement comprehensive education & public information campaign

- SAN and PIO benchmarked existing education programs (Plano, Tucson, & Ft. Worth)

- Tucson model, “Too Good to Throw Away” selected and authorization secured from program developer to adapt for Dallas
HIGHLIGHTS:
SAN Recycling Education Program

- City staff tailored the curriculum to Dallas’ recycling program

- “Too Good to Throw Away”
  - Teaches the 3-R’s (reduce, reuse, recycle) to grades 1–5 in a fun, age-appropriate way
  - Includes pre- and post-visit activities to help teachers reinforce the message of waste prevention
HIGHLIGHTS: SAN Recycling Education Program

- “Too Good to Throw Away” compatible with TEKS, per DISD Science Curriculum Department

- At DISD July 2005 In-Service Training, SAN staff introduced 150 elementary science teachers to “Too Good to Throw Away”, with plans to use in classrooms this school year
EEI Development Process:

- Interdepartmental Collaboration
  - Through several environmental educational meetings, DWU & SAN recognized similarity in educational outreach strategies
  - Partnership serves as the catalyst for the Environmental Education Initiative
  - Plan to hire a professional educational firm to deliver message to local schools, as an extension of staff efforts
    - Adds depth of experience in educational arena and breadth of environmental knowledge
  - Both departments will share in program costs, responsibilities, policies and procedures
EEI Development Process (cont.)

- EEI Program Rationale
  - Offers a proactive, disciplined approach to environmental education in schools
  - Leverages city resources by combining efforts, thus creating one voice
  - Aligns city’s environmental educational outreach agenda with school systems’ educational requirements
EEI Program:

- **Mission**
  - To offer environmental educational programming about City of Dallas programs in a cohesive, user-friendly, accessible series from which teachers may choose curriculum offerings, directly aligned with national and state educational requirements
EEI Program (cont.):

- **Goals**
  - Increase recycling
  - Reduce water usage
  - Communicate environmental issues to local schools
  - Encourage teacher participation through interactive workshops with Continuing Education Units (CEU)
  - Recruit community partners beyond ISDs
    - Environmental Fairs, HOA meetings, etc..
Selection Process:

- Developed & advertised a Request for Competitive Sealed Proposals
- Five proposals submitted
  - Learning Bridge
  - PATH: Prevention Awareness & Toxic Free Habits
  - Center for Environmental Education, also known as Wet in the City
  - BDS Technologies
  - Hamline University/University of North Texas
Selection Process: (cont.)

- Selection Committee comprised of five (5) staff members representing:
  - Dallas Water Utilities
  - Library
  - Public Works & Transportation
  - Sanitation Services
- Three local high school students served in an advisory capacity to evaluate the vendors’ presentation styles and ability to connect with the target audience
- All vendors were provided an opportunity to present proposals:
  - Four presentations, one no-show
Selection Criteria Weights:

- Experience in Field 30 points
- Cost of proposed project, financial stability of company 25 points
- Presentation and communication 25 points
- Work Plan 20 points
Staff Recommendation:

○ Hamline University/UNT
  ● Both institutions have experience in providing professional development in science & environmental education
  ● Hamline’s Center for Global Environmental Education
    ○ Experience in development of curriculum and media for local, regional and national audiences
    ○ Products in English and Spanish

○ Proposed Scope of Work (Year 1)
  ● Curriculum development for Water Conservation (SAN curriculum completed)
  ● Classroom presentations
  ● Teacher training workshops
  ● Community outreach events
  ● Supplemental teaching materials
Staff Recommendation: (cont.)

- Deliverables
  - Monthly reports of program milestones and achievements
  - Annual assessments of program effectiveness
  - Website licenses for restructured programs
    - Media materials
    - CD ROMS

- Proposed Budget
  - Not to exceed $190,000
Summary:

- SAN & DWU will work in partnership to deliver an Environmental Education Initiative as “one voice”

- Both programs are aligned with Council’s overall Neighborhood Quality of Life agenda
  - Commitment to water conservation
  - Commitment to Sanitation’s “Too Good To Throw Away” Program
Next Steps:

- 9/28/05  Council Agenda for review & approval
- Oct 2005  Execute contract
- Nov 2005  Implement Program
- May 2006  Provide feedback to committee
Appendix

- RFP: Required Experience
Request For Proposal:

Required Experience Requested

- High level responsive professionalism and quality customer service
- Experience working with and training teachers and administrators
- Experience in effectively reaching a diverse student population in classroom settings
- Experience in developing and implementing an established, field testing K-12 environmental education classroom curriculum with proven results
- Demonstrated experience in planning and implementing high-profile collaborative community event