



March 22, 2017

The Honorable Ed Hernandez, O.D.
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2080
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 541 (Allen) Stormwater Guidelines for Schools - Notice of Support

Dear Senator Ed Hernandez:

The City of Azusa strongly supports SB 541 which encourages school districts to partner with local municipalities to address stormwater pollution by calling on the State Water Quality Control Board, the State Department of Education and the Office of the State Architect to develop best practices for water capture design standards for all new school construction and reconstruction.

Under the 2012 Municipal Separate Storm Water Sewer System (MS4) permit, adopted by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, cities in Los Angeles County must meet some of the strongest water quality guidelines in the country. In order to meet these standards, municipalities must spend billions of dollars upgrading infrastructure and storm water capture technology.

In order to comply with the requirements of the MS4 permit, the City of Azusa joined with several other cities, the County of Los Angeles and the LA County Flood Control District in forming the Rio Hondo/San Gabriel River Watershed Enhanced Watershed Management Group (Group). The Group has spent approximately \$800,000 preparing an Enhanced Watershed Management Plan (EWMP) to comply with the MS4 Permit requirements. The Group's EWMP calls for the implementation of \$1.4 billion worth of stormwater improvements by 2028. The City's share of this cost is \$340 Million. The estimated on-going maintenance cost is \$2.2 Million a year. By way of comparison the City's entire annual operating budget is \$37 Million.

In many cases, cities are working with their local park districts to find suitable open space sites to capture and treat stormwater, but in many urban areas, particularly in Los Angeles County and the Bay Area, school sites are among the largest parcels in otherwise fully built-out cities.

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However, because schools are not currently subject to an MS4 permit, there are no water capture standards or best practices for schools to follow.

School sites offer a unique opportunity to partner with municipalities to capture and treat stormwater. During construction or reconstruction, a campus can be retrofitted to capture, treat, store and use rainwater with rain gardens, bioswales, cisterns, and native plants. Adding these natural features will also offer students more healthy environments that have been shown to improve concentration, reduce stress, and stimulate creativity.

SB 541 provides useful guidelines and best practices standards for schools to partner with cities to locate stormwater projects that improve water quality and sustainability while improving our campuses for generations.

For these reasons, the City of Azusa supports SB 541.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Romero Rocha". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Joseph Romero Rocha
Mayor

cc: Azusa City Council
Honorable Blanca E. Rubio, State Assemblymember
Members, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Joe A. Gonsalves & Son
Jennifer Quan, League of California Cities