



**R-18**

Date: December 6, 2011

To: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

From: Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske, Fifth District *GS*

Subject: AGENDA ITEM: Report on Status of Community Gardens in El Dorado Park

**DISCUSSION**

The Long Beach Community Gardens are located on 8.5 acres in the El Dorado Park area. Long Beach Community Garden Association, Inc. is a private, not for profit organization, which maintains plots which are located on land that is leased from the City of Long Beach.

During discussions concerning locating a dog park on land near the Community Gardens, several members of the association mentioned the run off and flooding that takes place during and after rains because the area is low lying and their concern that fecal and urine matter would taint their plots.

A Los Angeles Times article on the gardens on April 27, 2011 ([http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/home\\_blog/2011/04/long-beach-community-garden.html](http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/home_blog/2011/04/long-beach-community-garden.html)) mentions the flooding as well as problems with disease and wild animals. The article also notes that pesticides and fertilizers are allowed, which together with other factors during rain may or may not result in run-off into the San Gabriel River.

Because this land does belong to the City of Long Beach, it would be helpful to have a status report concerning:

- An overview of the operations of these gardens;
- Problems associated with flooding and run off to make certain the City is in compliance with bacteria and chemical TMDLs from the gardens, the Animal Care Center and the potential dog park.
- Any available grants that would provide assistance to capture rain water and to diffuse run off so that flooding does not occur.
- Assessment of bacterial and chemical problems in the soil at the gardens in light of the fact that produce grown there is distributed to the community through a "Food Bank" set up by the association.

**Recommendation:**

A motion to approve a request that the City Manager provide a status report on the Long Beach Community Gardens in El Dorado Park that discusses the issues related to concerns of water runoff and flooding of the plots and possible contamination of the crops.