

For Immediate Release:

April 21, 2015

Contact:

Mary Anne Groen

Chief of Staff

(408) 535-4908 office

(408) 858-1724 cell

Vice Mayor Rose Herrera Calls for Drought Relief Incentive Programs (D.R.I.P.)

SAN JOSE, CA – Vice Mayor Rose Herrera and her colleagues call on the City Manager to utilize Santa Clara Valley Water District and Municipal Water rebate programs to create a lawn conversion program and to allow for gray water conversion in the most timely and inexpensive manner currently available. They also call on the rest of their council colleagues to pursue and/or support State legislation on water conservation incentives that could assist residents in their water conservation goals.

“The need to save water is not just a short term crisis,” states Vice Mayor Herrera, “Encouraging residential lawn conversion and home gray water recycling address both short term and long term water needs.”

San Jose residents have already shown they want to do the right thing when it comes to our environment, having already reduced their water usage by 12.8 percent. However, if we want to meet our new goal of a 25% reduction in water use we must evaluate what will give us the best value for our efforts. Lawn conversion incentives, gray water technology research, and supporting conservation legislation are all ways we can work toward water saving goals as we enter our fourth year of drought.

“We need to change how we think about water usage,” says Councilmember Margie Matthews, “if your front lawn looks bad, that’s good! Better yet, tear it out and replace it with landscaping more fitting for our arid region.”

Gray water systems have been rapidly evolving due to all the drought talk and we need to be part of that technology development. Gray water systems recycle water from bathroom sinks, showers, tubs, and washing machines to be used for other applications including certain types of irrigation and toilet water. Based on America Water Works Association estimates of average water consumption, gray water accounts for 40,880 gallons per four-person household per year.

A household that installs a gray water system could see as much as a 22% decrease in residential water use by recycling the gray water.

“We live in Silicon Valley and should keep up with technology advances that help us conserve water,” explains Councilmember Chappie Jones, “We must develop programs and policies that help our residents utilize these new technologies.”

“This extraordinary drought has pushed us to look at all of our opportunities for water saving programs,” states Councilmember Tam Nguyen, “We need to make conservation a way of life in San Jose.”

The final component of the D.R.I.P. plan includes advocating for State legislation that funds incentives and provides municipalities with more tools in the drought busting tool box.

About Vice Mayor Rose Herrera

Vice Mayor Rose Herrera represents District 8 in the City of San José. She currently serves as the Vice Chair of the Rules and Open Government Committee and as a member of the Community and Economic Development Committee, which she previously chaired, and the Transportation and Environment Committee, for which she is a previous Vice Chair. She also is a board member for the Capitol Corridor Joint Power Authority; Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee; Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force; Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency (governing and implementation boards); and Work2Future. Vice Mayor Herrera Chairs the League of California Cities statewide Transportation, Communication, and Public Works Committee. She serves on the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Board of Directors, Governance Committee, Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board, and as VTA Congestion Management and Planning Chair. For more information, go to <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/district8/>.

###