TO:               HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM:        CITY MANAGER       DEPARTMENT: ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
DATE:       JUNE 13, 2005       CMR: 275:05
SUBJECT:   RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY MANAGER TO CAST BALLOTS ON BEHALF OF THE CITY IN FAVOR OF A PROPOSED INCREASE IN A SANTA CLARA COUNTY VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT ASSESSMENT ON CITY-OWNED PROPERTY

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that the Council adopt the attached Resolution authorizing the City Manager to cast ballots on behalf of the City in favor of a proposed increase in a Santa Clara County Vector Control District assessment on City-owned property.

DISCUSSION
The Santa Clara County Vector Control District (District) has recently sent ballots to County property owners for the purpose of voting for or against a proposed assessment for mosquito, vector and disease control services. The City has received ballots for assessments on 21 city-owned properties totaling $585.20 for fiscal year 2005-06. Individual property assessments range from a high of $163.02 to a low of $8.36, based on use and size. The proposed assessment is an increase to the District’s current assessment approved in 1996. (For fiscal year 2004-05, the City paid District assessments totaling $153.98 on 12 City-owned parcels.) The proposed assessment cannot be increased in future years without an approval from property owners in another ballot proceeding, except for an annual adjustment tied to the change in the San Francisco Bay Area Consumer Price Index, not to exceed 3 percent per year.

Funded by a special property assessment established in 1988, the District is managed by the Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health and is governed by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. The District is the only Santa Clara County public health program that controls and monitors mosquitoes and other disease-carrying insects and rodents. It also tests for and works to prevent diseases that are spread by mosquitoes, rodents and other insects, such as West Nile Virus, encephalitis, Hantavirus and plague. According to the ballot information provided by the District, the proposed increase in assessment is necessary to compensate for inflationary cost increases causing service costs to exceed available revenues. In addition, the District has recently depleted its reserve by spending extra funds to protect public health, animals and wildlife from West Nile Virus, a new disease spread by mosquitoes. If the proposed
assessment is not approved, the District has represented that it will be forced to reduce its mosquito control and disease prevention service levels. If approved, the District states that it would have sufficient resources to continue controlling insects and other harmful animals and to enhance such services in order to better respond to emerging public health threats such as West Nile virus.

A summary of proposed services to be paid for by the new assessment is attached. It should be noted that the District’s abatement and disease prevention effort involves the use of environmentally sensitive approaches. Instead of spraying for adult mosquitoes, the District finds and removes the stagnant water and weedy/overgrown areas that support mosquito breeding. For breeding sources that cannot be removed, the District uses mosquito fish and natural materials to eliminate mosquito larvae. This approach is endorsed by the Environmental Protection Agency, the University of California and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**RESOURCE IMPACT**
Should the proposed assessment be approved, the cost to the City FY 2005-06 will be $585.20. For future years, the cost could increase based on an annual CPI adjustment not to exceed 3 percent per year. If approved, funds to cover the assessment cost will be budgeted.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**
This recommendation is consistent with existing City policy in seeking Council’s position on ballot measures.

**TIMELINE**
To be counted, ballots must be cast by June 21, 2005.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**
Voting for an increased property assessment for County services does not constitute a project for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act.

PREPARED BY:  
WILLIAM W. FELLMAN  
Manager, Real Property

DEPARTMENT HEAD APPROVAL:  
CARL YEATS  
Director, Administrative Services

CITY MANAGER APPROVAL:  
EMILY HARRISON  
Assistant City Manager
ATTACHMENTS
Attachment A: Summary of Proposed District Services
Attachment B: Resolution