

STAFF REPORT

DATE: May 1, 2018

TO: City Council

FROM: Mitch Sears, Sustainability Manager
Kerry Daane Loux, Sustainability Coordinator

SUBJECT: Ratifications of 2018 Environmental Recognition Awards (ERA)

Recommendation

Ratify nominations from the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) for the 2018 Environmental Recognition Awards. The Awards will be presented at the May 15, 2018 City Council meeting, followed by a reception for the awardees and guests.

Fiscal Impact

Incidental award and reception costs are included in the FY17-18 Natural Resources program budget.

Background

The City annually conducts the Environmental Recognition Award program to encourage and recognize efforts in the community that benefit the environment and overall sustainability objectives. Started in 1995, this year is the 24th awards program, with a total of fourteen (14) nominations received. The three standard nomination categories include businesses; non-profit organizations; and individual or groups, each requiring residency or work completed in Davis.

A fourth category was added last year to celebrate the City of Davis Centennial. The Environmental Legacy Award is intended to recognize events, programs or milestones that have made a significant difference in Davis' environmental quality of life over the course of our 100-year history. Although nominations from the general public are not required, they are considered along with other possible nominations. This category can be decided at the discretion of the Natural Resources Commission and City Council. The first Legacy Award last year was dedicated to Davis bike lanes on the 50th anniversary of the first bike lane installations in the nation.

The ERA applications received for this year's program were electronically conveyed to the NRC ERA subcommittee members, who met to discuss and select the proposed awardees. Recommendations were then presented to the NRC by the subcommittee members at the March 26, 2018 regular meeting, and were unanimously approved by the full Commission.

The following are the NRC recommendations to City Council for the 2018 Environmental Recognition Award recipients, highlighted in yellow, along with other nominations received. The commission agreed that all nominations represented deserving organizations and individuals.

Individual/Groups: One individual, highlighted below, was selected. Additional nominees, all worthy of recognition, are also listed:

- **Martin Guerena** recently retired as the City of Davis Integrated Pest Management Specialist. Martin oversaw significant reductions in City pesticide use and helped develop policies to incorporate environmental sensitivity, public outreach and awareness. He worked to increase use of alternative, non-chemical methods of pest control for park and greenbelt maintenance.

Nominated by: Paul Steinberg

- Bob Schneider was nominated for his work with Tuleyome and Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument, Sierra Club, California Duck Days and the California Wilderness Coalition, among other efforts. Said Judy Moores, ‘Bob has worked actively for over 50 years to improve our environment on local, state and national levels.’
- Don Lotter, nominated by Cass Sylvia, developed personal environmental impact accounting software.
- Gene Trapp and JoEllen Ryan were nominated by Gayna Lamb-Bang for their on-going leadership and involvement with Friends of West Davis Pond.
- Jane Schafer-Kramer, nominated by Leslie Crenna, until recently coordinated the Davis Community Gardens.
- Judy Leatherman, nominated by Bekah Tsai, is the School Garden Coordinator at Montgomery Elementary School.

Businesses: Two businesses, highlighted below, were selected as co-awardees in the business category:

- **Repower Yolo**, a local solar provider, has a long-standing commitment to reducing our community carbon footprint. Said owner Chris Soderquist, ‘The company’s installation of close to 8000 solar panels in Davis can be considered equivalent to taking 5000 automobiles off the road or planting over 500,000 trees.’ Additionally, the NRC recognized both Soderquist and partner John Walter for their outstanding volunteer efforts within the community and their financial and in-kind support of climate/energy groups and nonprofit organizations in the community.

Nominated by: Jon Hammond, Indigo Architects

- **River City Bank, Davis**, is a pioneering bank within the Community Choice Energy sector, and provides the financial services for Valley Clean Energy. Additionally, River City has recently been selected as the City of Davis bank. The NRC noted the importance of financial expertise and support for renewable energy and other sustainability efforts in the community.

Nominated by: Rosa Cucicea

- Ecological Landscaping and owner Bernadette Balics were nominated in the business category by Leslie Crenna for design of healthy and sustainable urban gardens.

Non Profits: One non-profit organization, highlighted below, was selected:

- **Tree Davis** recently celebrated their 25th anniversary and is dedicated to keeping Davis green, clean and cool by enhancing and expanding our urban forest. The NRC commended Tree Davis' on-going work as a volunteer-based organization that has improved quality of life through planting and maintaining community trees. Tree Davis was also nominated in the Legacy category.

Nominated by: Julia Jones

- Cool Davis, nominated by Leslie Crenna, is an active network of residents, community organizations businesses and other partners committed to inspiring the Davis community to reduce greenhouse gas emission, adapt to a changing climate and improve the quality of life for all.
- Putah Creek Council was nominated by Melissa Thorme for their work in riparian habitat restoration, protection and environmental stewardship in the year of their 30th anniversary. Putah Creek Council was also nominated in the Legacy category.

Special Recognition: One organization, highlighted below, was selected in a special agency category that does not fit into the above:

- **Yolo County Housing** has a significant history of local actions related to sustainability and climate awareness. Said Lisa Baker, CEO, 'YCH has developed and managed affordable housing in Davis at Drew Circle, Eleanor Roosevelt Circle and nearby Davis Migrant Center, and works with City of Davis to increase energy opportunities for renters and persons of low income.'

Nominated by: Chris Soderquist

Legacy Award: One Environmental Legacy Award is being presented to:

- **University of California Unitrans bus system, in the year of their 50th anniversary.** Unitrans began operation on February 28, 1968 with two RTL double-decker buses that had been retired from service in London. It was opened to the general public as the transit service for City of Davis community in 1972, with city transit fund support. It has since grown into one of the largest student-run transit systems in the world.

More information on the Environmental Recognition Awards can be found at <http://cityofdavis.org>