Council to look at water use of city services
L.B.: Parks Dept. could face quarterly water usage reviews during shortage.

By Paul Eakins, Staff writer

LONG BEACH - A strategy to conserve water used by the city, a green airport implementation plan and removing vehicles for sale from some streets are among the issues the City Council will consider Tuesday.

The council meets at 5 p.m. in City Hall, 333 W. Ocean Blvd.

The region is facing an expected water shortage as early as next year, and the Long Beach Water Department implemented new rules last month to reduce residents' water use.

In order to reduce the city's use as well, Councilwomen Suja Lowenthal and Gerrie Schipske are asking the council to have the city manager develop a strategy to reduce water consumption. The city manager would work with the Water Department and the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department to reduce water in city parks and median strips.

Under the proposed plan, city officials would report back to the council on a quarterly basis the departments' amount and cost of water used.

The city's new water rules require residents to water only Monday, Thursday or Saturday, and only before 7 a.m. or after 6 p.m. City officials have said the city also is taking steps to reduce water by reducing landscape irrigation to only twice a week.

The city has 2,870 acres of park land. Of that, 2,020 are irrigated with drinkable water while the remaining 850 use reclaimed water.

According to a report from Schipske's office, the city has received complaints from residents about park and median sprinklers causing considerable runoff. The report says the current watering system isn't sufficient to conserve water.

"Due to the lack of automated sprinklers and other water conservation devices to control the amounts of water used to water the parks and medians, this high amount of water use is in most cases unavoidable," the report says.

Parking rules eyed

As part of the city's ongoing effort to clean up city streets and improve parking, Councilman Gary DeLong of the 3rd District is requesting the council's support in having
the city attorney amend the city's parking rules to prohibit the parking of vehicles with "for sale" signs on several streets in southeast Long Beach.

Those streets include parts of Livingston Drive, Lois Lane, Second Street and Naples Plaza. Some other city streets already have the rule in place.

The council approved a rule last month to prevent car rental agencies from storing or parking their vehicles on city streets, and the council also has been discussing new rules for the parking of trailers on streets.

**Green airport**

A cleaner, greener Long Beach Airport is the goal of the city's Green Airport/Neighborhood Protection Program, and the council will consider an implementation plan for the program Tuesday.

The plan requires the city manager to appoint a performance monitor for the Green Airport Program and an annual report to the council about the program's progress. The plan lays out how exactly each part of the airport and neighborhood programs will be implemented.

Many aspects of the Green Airport Program already are in place, according to city staff reports.

That program is meant to reduce and monitor air pollution at the airport. The Neighborhood Protection Program was created to ensure environmental, noise and other concerns will be appropriately handled so as not to have an impact on neighborhoods surrounding the airport.

**Lobbyist contract**

The council will consider a one-year contract not to exceed $180,000 for the city's new Washington, D.C., lobbying firm, Van Scoyoc Associates.

The company's first contract with the city ran from January through September after the council chose the new lobbyist at the end of 2006.

The city and port of Long Beach are ending their contracts this year with Carpi Clay & Smith, whose partner E. Del Smith has lobbied for both for 37 years and 38 years respectively. City and port officials have said they want larger lobbying firms to represent them in the nation's capital.

Smith's contract with the city ended in September, and a proposed extension through the end of December may not happen because Smith is asking for more money than city officials say Long Beach can afford. The city most recently had paid Smith $118,000 per year.
Carpi Clay & Smith's contract with the port will expire at the end of the year.

The council also will consider Tuesday a one-year contract not to exceed $102,288 with the lobbying firm Michael J. Arnold and Associates to represent Long Beach in Sacramento.