

**Item Title:** Accept and Appropriate \$50,000 Urban Agriculture Conservation Grant from the National Association of Conservation Districts

**Specific Action Requested:**

**That the Board of Commissioners accepts and appropriates to the Grants and Donations Fund a \$50,000 Urban Agriculture Conservation Grant from the National Association of Conservation Districts to build technical assistance capacity for urban agriculture conservation projects.**

**Item Summary:**

In July, the Wake County Soil and Water Conservation District (Wake SWCD) applied for, and was awarded, the grant from the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) to fund one new, temporary FTE for an Urban Agriculture Specialist (UAS). Over the last several years, the popularity of urban agriculture, or the growing and marketing of intense small acres in neighborhoods and community gardens, has steadily increased in Wake County. Based on recent statistics, one in five children in Wake County are food insecure and Wake County has 18 food deserts as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture. This corresponds to over 100,000 Wake County residents. The UAS position will leverage existing resources to help combat this issue in Wake County.

The UAS will provide technical services to urban agricultural producers and community garden members, with the primary focus being communities underserved by grocery stores and in food deserts. Additionally, the UAS will evaluate sites and make specific recommendations addressing resource concerns and needs communicated by land users. Furthermore, the UAS will assist Wake SWCD in applying for grants to provide financial assistance to install Best Management Practices (BMPs) in urban and community gardens. The UAS will design and host urban agricultural workshops and establish a networking forum for community partners, growers, distributors, consumer, our non-profit providers and government agencies to build partnerships and increase awareness of urban agriculture as a method to combat hunger, obesity and malnutrition. The 1 FTE is temporary, will be limited to under 1,000 hours of employment and will terminate when the grant funding runs out. Funding for the grant is broken down by the following categories:

| Expenditure Category        | NACD Grant Funding | Description   |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Salary                      | \$35,000           | 19.23 hours a week  |
| Consultant/Contractor Costs | \$2,000            | To expand expertise in urban agricultural methodologies             |
| Training                    | \$9,000            | For training brochures, materials and specialized training sessions |
| Supplies and Equipment      | \$2,000            | Miscellaneous and specialized supplies                              |
| Advertising and Promotions  | \$2,000            | Outreach, PSA, communication and social media                       |
| Total                       | <b>\$50,000</b>    |   |

**Attachments:**

1. Grant Proposal
2. Grant Award
3. Budget Memo