

**FIRST AMENDMENT TO CONSULTANT SERVICES CONTRACT  
BETWEEN THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE  
AND K & D LANDSCAPING, INC.**

**THIS FIRST AMENDMENT TO CONTRACT** for consultant services is entered into by and between the **City of Watsonville** ("City") and **K&D LANDSCAPING, Inc** ("Consultant") this 1st day of July 2025. The City and Consultant agree as follows:

**RECITALS**

**WHEREAS**, City and Consultant have previously executed a Consultant Services Contract to provide landscape maintenance services for City owned properties from December 18, 2023 to December 31, 2026; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has added additional tasks to the work program of the Consultant causing additional cost to the project completion; and

**WHEREAS**, the amendment of the Contract for Consultant Services is in the best interest of the city of Watsonville.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the City and the Consultant agree that the Contract shall be amended as follows:

Section 1 is hereby amended to add the following:

***"Section 1. Scope of Services. In addition to the performance of those services specified in detail in Exhibit "A" of the Contract, Consultant shall perform the additional services specified in detail in Exhibit "1," entitled FIRST AMENDMENT TO SCOPE OF SERVICES, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein."***

Section 4 is hereby amended to read:

***"Section 4 and Exhibit "C" both entitled "Compensation" of the Contract, are hereby amended to provide an additional amount of compensation annually of fifty thousand two hundred eighty-four dollars (\$50,284.00) for professional services."***

All other terms and conditions of the Contract dated December 18, 2023, as amended, shall remain in full force and effect.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the parties hereto have executed this First Amendment to Consultant Services Contract the day and year first herein above written.

**CITY OF WATSONVILLE**

**K & D LANDCAPING, INC.**

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Tamara Vides, City Manager

By \_\_\_\_\_  
DocuSigned by:  
Justin White  
87E9FED31634479  
Justin White, CEO

ATTEST:

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Irwin I. Ortiz, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Samantha W. Zutler, City Attorney

## **EXHIBIT "1"**

### **FIRST AMENDMENT TO SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The scope of services is as follows:

Additions of the following areas to the existing contract:

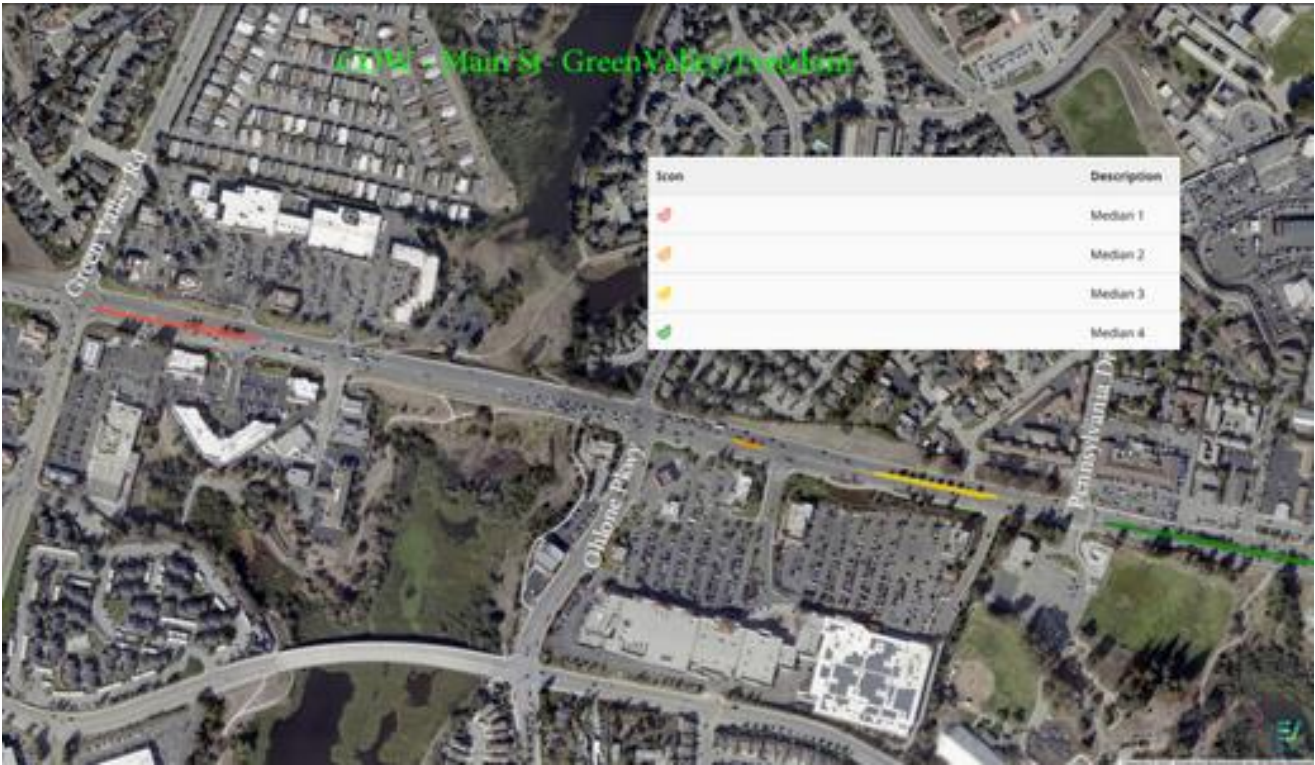
- (3) Three medians on Riverside Dr. between Locus St. and Main St.
- (5) Five Streetscapes on Riverside Dr.
- (3) Three medians on Main St. between Green Valley Rd. and Pennsylvania Dr.
- (1) One median on Ohlone Pkwy at Main St.
- (4) Four medians on Main St. between Pennsylvania Dr. and Ford St.
- (1) One median on Freedom Blvd. at Main St.
- (1) Streetscape on West side of Bridge St. From Hushbeck Ave. to Kings Wy.

K & D LANDSCAPING, Inc. will provide all equipment, materials, and labor necessary to provide a complete landscape maintenance program to the additional locations described herein and per maintenance standards specified in the original contract language.

K & D LANDSCAPING, Inc. Is responsible for coordination with Caltrans, including permitting, notification, and standards for all traffic control and lane closures necessary to perform landscape services withing the Caltrans right of way.

EXHIBIT "1"

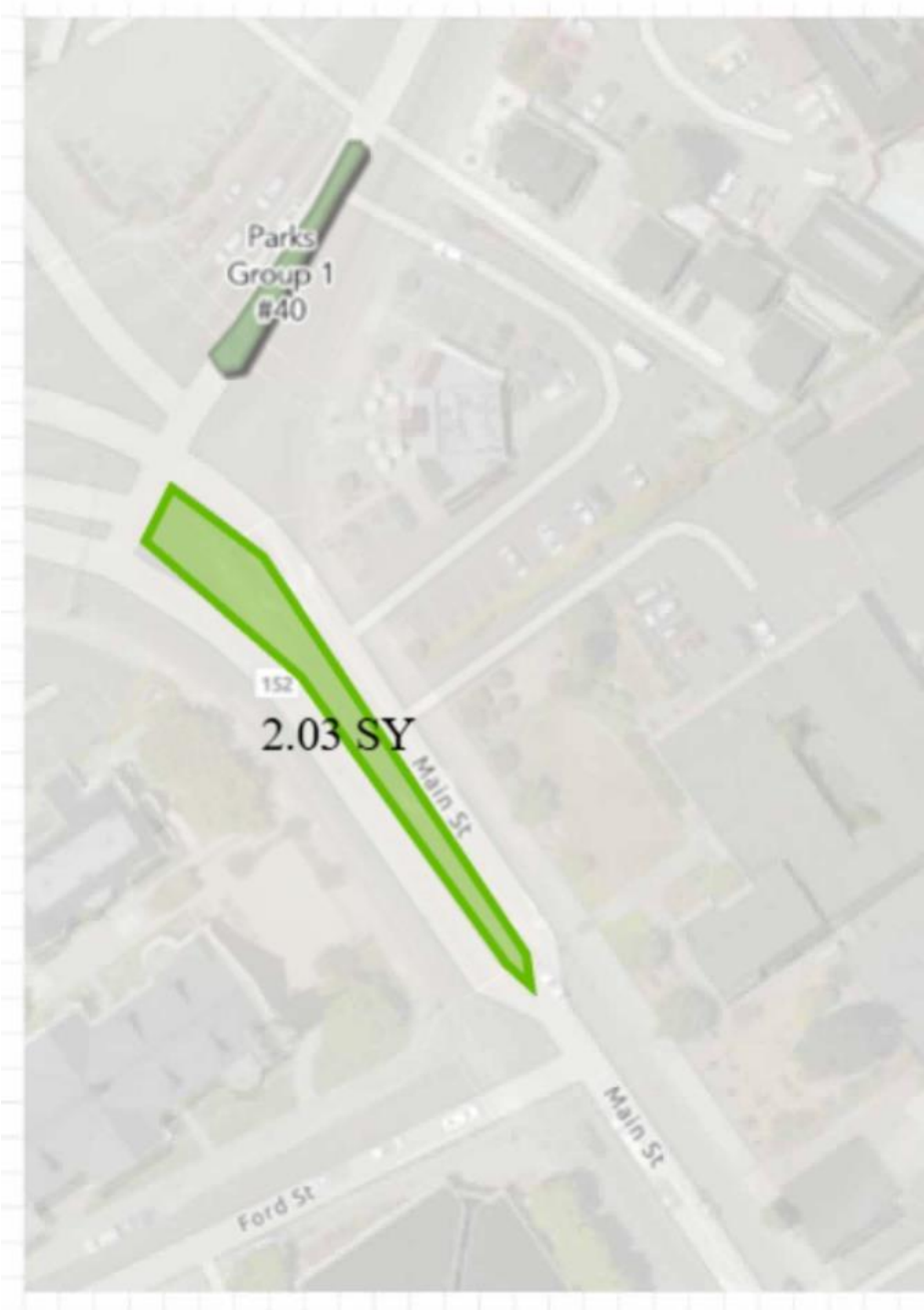


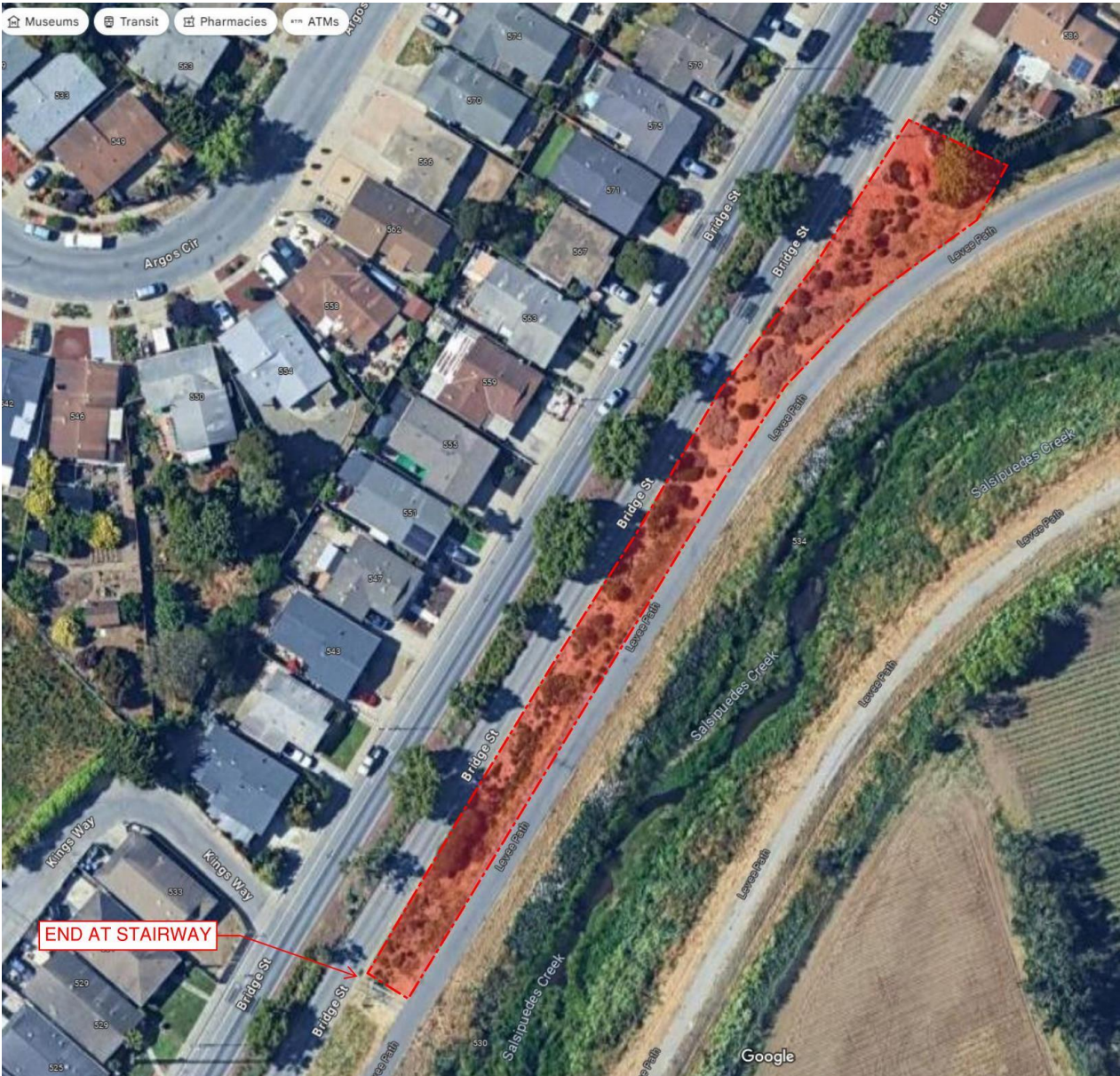


COW – Main St Medians- #69

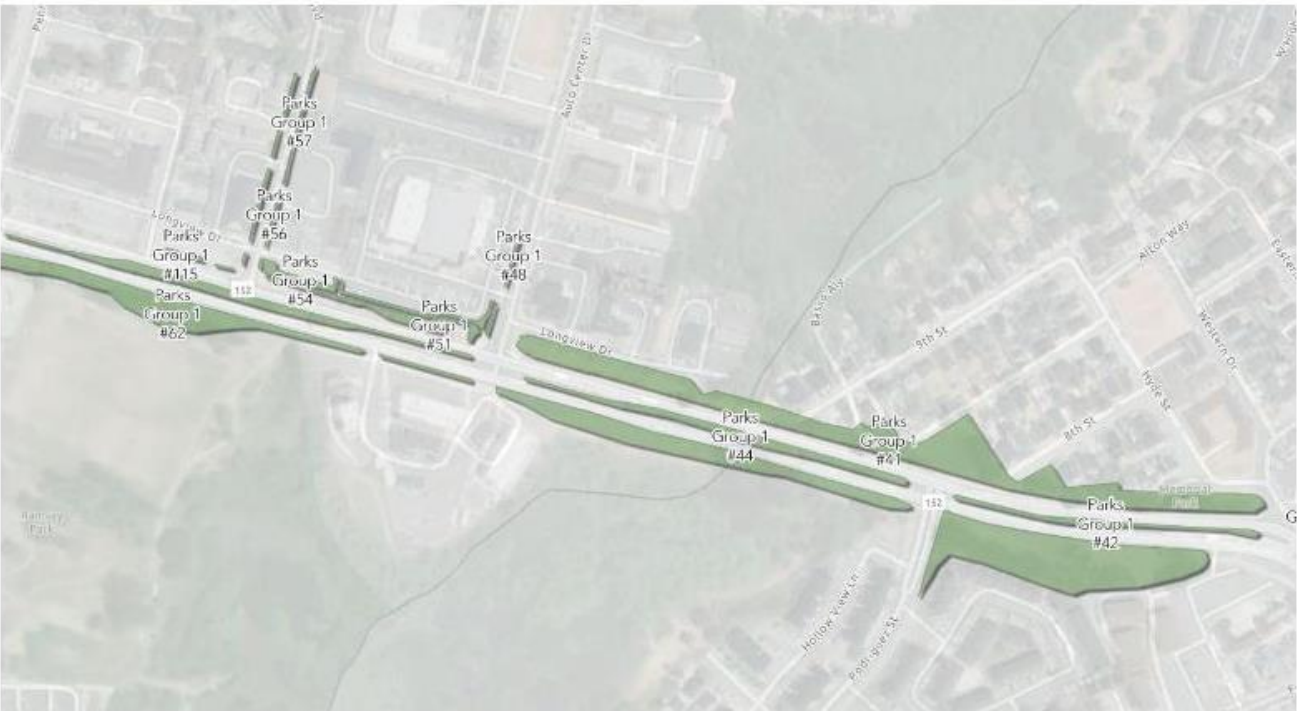
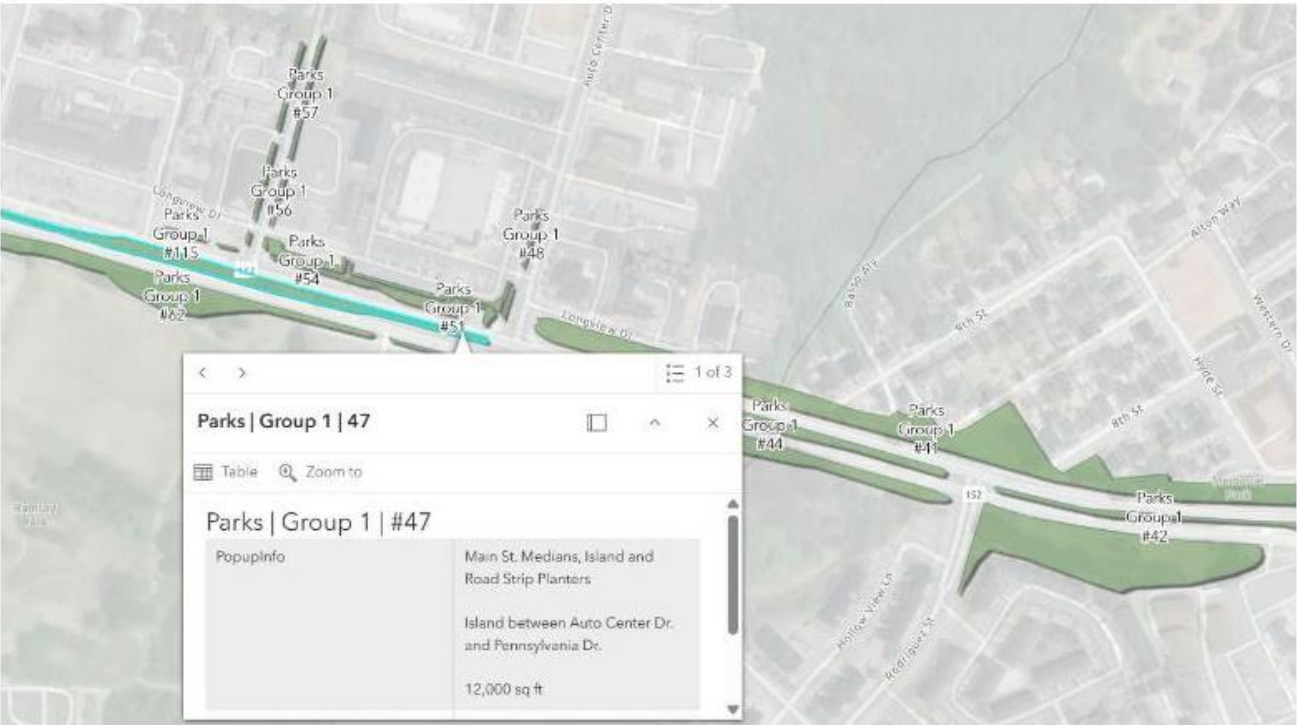


COW Main/Ford St Medians





COW Main St Medians- #47, 44, 42



Ohlone and Main – Group #67, 65, 64



## **Exhibit “c”**

### **Compensation**

An additional \$50,284.00 will be added to the total amount of the contract annually to account for the additional scope of work. The new total amount of the contract is not to exceed \$273,342 annually.



**LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT FOR:**

**CITY OF WATSONVILLE**

**04/24/2025**



62C HANGAR WAY, WATSONVILLE, CA 95076

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## **A Letter To Management**

Dear Joseph Medina

Thank you for considering K&D Landscaping. We are proud to have partnered with the City of Watsonville to maintain and enhance our local landscapes, and we are excited about the opportunity to expand our work with you through this new project.

As a family-owned business with nearly 40 years of service to this community, we deeply value our connection to Watsonville and the trust you've placed in us. Our team is committed to delivering the same high standards of care and professionalism you've come to expect. For this project, we bring a proactive approach to landscape management, tailored specifically to meet the city's needs while prioritizing sustainability, efficiency, and community pride.

We appreciate the chance to continue supporting the City of Watsonville and look forward to working together on this project. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or for additional information regarding our proposal.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony B', is written over a thin horizontal line.

Tony Battistella Director of Growth, K&D Landscaping



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## **K&D Success Team**

### **JUSTIN WHITE - CEO**



Justin White, CEO of K&D Landscaping since 2019, has led the company to remarkable growth, elevating revenue from 1 million to 20 million in five years. Committed to innovation and client satisfaction, White sets high standards in the landscape industry, positioning K&D as a leader through strategic vision and excellence.

### **TONY BATTISTELLA - DIRECTOR OF GROWTH**

Tony Battistella, K&D Landscaping's Director of Growth, brings nearly two decades of horticultural expertise and a passion for community building. His passions to drive both business expansion and meaningful connections facilitate long-term partnerships within these communities.



### **KENDEL WHITE - PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER**

Kendel White, founder and president of K&D Landscaping, is dedicated to exceptional customer experiences and unmatched horticultural expertise. His passion for landscaping and client-focused approach have built a company renowned for innovation and excellence. Under his leadership, K&D Landscaping thrives with a stellar reputation and lasting success.





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## **Site-Specific Notes**

- Implement practices to ensure healthy and consistent regrowth of plants, enhancing the landscape's long-term resilience and appearance.
- Regularly trim trees up to 12 feet to promote safety, maintain aesthetic appeal, and support healthy growth across the property.
- Maintain open and consistent communication with city representative, ensuring alignment on goals, updates, and ongoing needs.
- Utilize 100% electric equipment to achieve zero emissions and reduce noise levels
- Traffic control plans will be communicated 14 days before work begins in center medians.



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**Landscape Management Pricing**

69	\$2,232.00
65	\$3,864.00
64	\$2,232.00
47	\$2,976.00
44	\$2,976.00
42	\$1,488.00
25	\$4,908.00
26	\$2,490.00
27	\$4,908.00
28	\$3,606.00
29	\$1,488.00
30	\$4,464.00
31	\$1,488.00
32	\$744.00
67	\$1,800.00
40	\$2,850.00
Bridge Street	\$3,940.00
Ford Street Median	\$1,830.00
Monthly Total	\$4,190
Yearly Total	\$50,284.00



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## **Landscape Management**

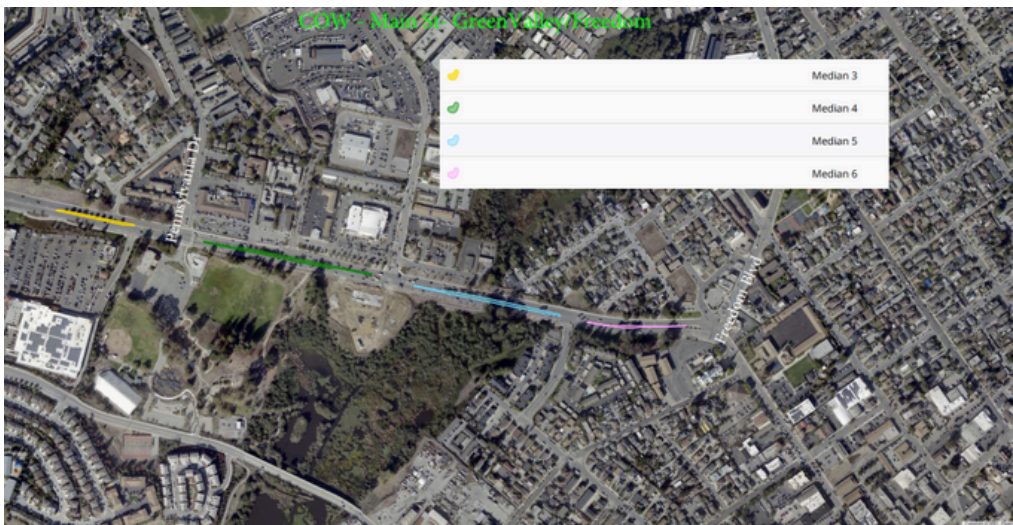
- **Weekly Landscape Maintenance & Irrigation Checks:** Key areas are regularly inspected to maintain visual appeal, while our manager and crew perform weekly checks to ensure all irrigation systems function efficiently.
- **Comprehensive Fertilization & Weed Control:** Our integrated approach promotes healthy plant life through scheduled fertilization and weed management.
- **Landscape Improvement Plan:** We implement a long-term strategy for continuous landscaping enhancement over the next decade.
- **100% Electric Equipment:** We utilize zero-emission electric equipment for noise reduction and sustainability.
- **Five-Year Warranty:** We offer a five-year warranty on all landscape work completed under contract, ensuring quality and peace of mind.
- **Proactive Communication:** Our team prioritizes clear communication with the specified parties, keeping you informed at all times.



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Landscape Management Mapping





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## **Landscape Management Additions**

Add 67 (1) One median on Ohlone Pkwy at Main St.

Un numbered (The last median near Ford St. is not included in current proposal)

#40 -(1) One median on Freedom Blvd. At Main St.

Un numbered -(1) Streetscape on West side of Bridge St. From Hushbeck Ave. to Kings Wy.



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## **Management Specifications**

K & D LANDSCAPING, Inc. will provide all equipment, materials, and labor necessary to provide a complete landscape maintenance program as specified herein:

- **LAWN CARE**

All lawns will be mowed once a week during the active growing season and as needed during winter months. All lawns will be fertilized four (4) times a year to promote healthy growth and maintain a lush green appearance. Weeds will be controlled regularly, and all clippings shall be removed from the property, mulched, or placed in a designated area on site if approved by owner

- **GROUND COVER & SHRUBBERY**

Trimming and edging of all ground cover and shrubbery shall be done as needed to maintain a uniform appearance and to encourage the natural shape of all plant material. Fertilizing consists of (2) applications of balanced slow-release fertilization per year, depending on the plant material and seasonal conditions. Dead or dying plants will be brought to the attention of the manager immediately along with a proposal to replace

- **WEED CONTROL**

Bedding areas will be maintained reasonably free of weeds as needed. This may include the use of approved herbicides. K&D uses best management practices and an integrated pest management program to reduce herbicide use based on site conditions.

- **TREE CARE**

Trees up to 12' in height will be pruned to promote the natural shape of the tree and maintain healthy growth. Trees will be fertilized on an as needed basis. Trees 13' in height and above are not covered in this proposal, however they will be assessed by our ISA Certified Arborist once a year to identify any high-risk situations. Recommendations will be brought to the Owner's attention along with a detailed proposal to mediate the risk. A complete tree assessment of the property can be performed at any time upon Owner's request for an additional fee.



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## **Management Specifications**

### **• IRRIGATION SYSTEM**

Automatic controllers will be scheduled appropriately with seasonal requirements. Controllers will be set to water at night or early morning. The irrigation system will be inspected routinely and any issues with the system will be brought to the attention of the property manager. For minor repairs under \$500.00 K&D will perform work and bill. Irrigation repairs \$500.00 and over will require approval by the owner prior to beginning work. A complete Irrigation audit can be performed by our certified irrigation auditor upon owner request for an additional fee.

### **• PEST CONTROL**

Minor pest infestations, which are treatable by the on-site crew, will be controlled using foliar insecticides. All other pest related problems, including gophers, will be handled on an individual basis, and billed separately.

### **• SIDEWALKS AND CURBS**

Weeds, litter, leaves, and other debris that accumulate adjacent to landscaped areas and in parking lot corners will be removed on the day of service.

### **• DEBRIS AND CLIPPING REMOVAL**

All debris and clippings generated by K & D will be removed on the day of service. Incidental and limited man-made litter will also be removed and placed in an on-site receptacle.

### **• MONTHLY BILLING**

Monthly bills will be due and payable by the 5th of the following month. This agreement can be cancelled by either party with 60 day written notice.

### **• ANNUAL INCREASE**

To stay current with rising cost of living and inflation, there may be an annual cost of living increase.

### **• FREQUENCY OF VISITS**

The site will be maintained on a weekly basis. Due to the safety of our crews during inclement weather (i.e., lightning, high winds, or hard rains) service may be altered, skipped, or limited service provided, including holidays. During these events, properties will be monitored for storm damage. This will not affect the monthly cost.



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## **Partner References**

### **Chaminade Resort & Spa**

- K&D has been responsible for maintaining the luxurious Chaminade Resort & Spa since 2021, ensuring the landscape evolves to a premier standard.
- Collaborating closely with the resort's management, we prepare landscaped areas for various events like weddings and business gatherings, ensuring the highest curb appeal.
- For inquiries, please reach out to Dustin Colegrove at [dustin.colegrove@chaminade.com](mailto:dustin.colegrove@chaminade.com)

### **East Garrison Community**

- Our dedicated team of six maintains the vast East Garrison Community, saving over 5 million gallons of water and installing 600,000 sqft of landscaping, making us the preferred vendor for this vibrant community.
- For inquiries, please contact Tony Battistella to set up permissions.

### **Seascape Resort-Aptos**

- Since 2021, K&D has been enhancing the landscaping at Seascape Resort, with a focus on improving quality. The positive feedback from the resort staff and Homeowners Association attests to our success in fulfilling this commitment.
- Currently collaborating with the staff on budgeting and planning improvement projects to enhance the landscape's beauty and reduce water consumption. For inquiries, please contact Kyla Piramoon at [kyla.holcomb@gmail.com](mailto:kyla.holcomb@gmail.com)



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## **Terms and Conditions**

**1. CHANGES IN THE WORK:** Landscape Maintenance Provider shall promptly notify the Contracting Party of: (a) latent physical conditions at the site differing materially from those indicated in this Agreement, or (b) unknown physical conditions differing materially from those ordinarily encountered and generally recognized as inherent in work of the character provided for in this Agreement. Any expenses incurred due to such conditions shall be paid for by the Contracting Party as added work.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, should site conditions be such that the Agreement cannot be performed for the contract price, then the price shall be adjusted by mutual agreement of the parties, and if the parties cannot reach an agreement on the adjusted contract price, then this Agreement may be rescinded by either party with no further liability to the other for said rescission. However, any obligation of money due to Landscape Maintenance Provider at the time of rescission shall survive the rescission.

No extra or change order work shall be required to be performed without prior written authorization of the person contracting for the landscape maintenance. Any Additional Work Authorization forms for changes or extra work shall be incorporated in and become a part of this Agreement. However, in the event that the building department or other governmental body requires a change or modification, then the Landscape Maintenance Provider may make that change prior to receiving written authorization and thereafter negotiate the effect of that change with the Contracting Party.

**2. CONTRACTING PARTY'S RESPONSIBILITIES:** Contracting Party is responsible to supply water, gas, sewer, and electrical utilities unless otherwise agreed to in writing. Electricity and water to the site are necessary. Contracting Party agrees to allow and provide Landscape Maintenance Provider and its equipment access to the Property. Contracting Party is responsible for having sufficient funds to comply with this Agreement. This is a cash transaction unless otherwise specified.



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## **Terms and Conditions**

Contracting Party shall be responsible to remove or protect any personal property located on the Property, and Landscape Maintenance Provider shall not be liable for damage to same, unless caused by its active negligence or willful misconduct. Such property may include furniture, toys, play equipment, low voltage equipment and lighting, and other exterior improvements.

Contracting Party will point out and warrant the property lines to Landscape Maintenance Provider.

**3. DELAYS:** Landscape Maintenance Provider agrees to diligently work pursuant to the agreed schedule for the Work. However, Landscape Maintenance Provider shall be entitled to its full monthly payment pursuant to this Agreement, even if maintenance work is not fully performed, for reasons beyond the control of the Landscape Maintenance Provider, including but not limited to: acts of neglect or omission of Contracting Party or Contracting Party's employees or agents, acts of God, stormy or inclement weather, strikes, lockouts, boycotts or other labor union activities, extra work ordered by the Contracting Party, acts of public enemy, riots or civil commotion, inability to secure material through regular channels, imposition of Government priority or allocation of materials, failure of Contracting Party to make payments when due, or delays caused by inspection or changes ordered by the inspectors of authorized governmental bodies, for acts of independent contractors, or holidays, or other causes beyond Landscape Maintenance Provider's reasonable control.

**4. LABOR AND MATERIAL:** Landscape Maintenance Provider shall pay all valid charges for labor and material it incurs and uses pursuant to this Agreement.

**5. PAYMENT:** Payment will be past due if not paid within five (5) days of the date specified in this Agreement. 3% convenience fee will be charged on all credit card payments.



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## **Terms and Conditions**

**RIGHT TO STOP WORK:** Landscape Maintenance Provider shall have the right to stop work under this Agreement if any payment by Contracting Party is not to be made, when due. Landscape Maintenance Provider may suspend the Work until all payments due are received. This remedy is in addition to any other right or remedy that Landscape Maintenance Provider may have.

**6.CLEAN-UP:** Landscape Maintenance Provider shall remove from the Property all debris and clippings created by its operations. Notwithstanding the foregoing, should Landscape Maintenance Provider be unable to clean debris by usual and customary means, such as by blower or water, for any reason, including but not limited to any local or emergency ordinance, then Landscape Maintenance Provider shall only be required to use its best efforts to leave the Property in a neat and clean condition.

**7.COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS:** In connection with the performance by Landscape Maintenance Provider of its duties pursuant to this Agreement, Contracting Party shall obtain and pay for all permits and comply with all federal, state, county and local laws, ordinances, and regulations.

**8.ATTORNEY FEES:** If there is any legal proceeding arising out of this Agreement, the prevailing party shall be entitled to have its reasonable attorney fees and costs paid by the other party.

**9.CLAIMS-LIMITATIONS:** No legal proceeding of any kind arising from or related to this Agreement or the performance thereof, shall be commenced by either party against the other more than two years after completion or cessation of work under this Agreement. Any damages for which Landscape Maintenance Provider may be liable to Contracting Party shall not, in any event, exceed the total price of this Agreement.

**10.VALIDITY:** In case one or more of the provisions of this Agreement or any application thereof shall be invalid, unenforceable, or illegal, the validity, enforceability and legality of the remaining provisions and any other application shall not in any way be impaired thereby.



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## **Terms and Conditions**

**11. LIMITED WARRANTY:** Landscape Maintenance Provider warrants that all work will be performed in a good and workmanlike manner. There are no warranties either expressed or implied except those specifically set forth in this Agreement, and there are absolutely no guarantees relating to continued life or growth of plant material beyond the period necessary for initial planting shock, but not to exceed ninety (90) days, unless otherwise stated herein.

Any warranty or guarantee is only effective if Contracting Party has complied with all the terms and conditions, payments, and other provisions of this Agreement.

Contracting Party is responsible for any damages to plants or otherwise, caused by either over- or underwatering, when that over- or underwatering is done through Contracting Party-handled manual irrigation or hand watering, or when there is an interruption in the service of an automatic sprinkler system, or over- or under-fertilization, when Contracting Party handles or directs the fertilization, or where plants and other landscaping are damaged by pests or diseases.

Landscaping Maintenance Provider shall also not be responsible for any damage caused by inclement weather, run-off, drainage problems, or any other cause of overwatering.

Acknowledgement of 2025 Terms and Conditions

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_



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[kndlandscaping.com](http://kndlandscaping.com)

## **Licensure and Affiliation**

### Description Number

- Contractor's License C-27 #664584
- I.A. Certified Irrigation Technician #115137
- Pesticide Control Business License #36845
- Qualified Pesticide Applicators License #140636
- Dept. of Industrial Relations #10000003902
- Dun & Bradstreet #31-153-4405

We proudly support and are members of the following associations:

- California Landscape Contractors Association CLCA
- National Association of Landscape Professionals NALP
- Building Owners and Managers Association BOMA
- Educational Community of Homeowners ECHO
- Pesticide Applicators Professional Association PAPA
- Irrigation Association IA
- Employee - Employer Assistance Program. EEAP Safety



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## The Million Gallon Case Study

We understand the City of Watsonville is focused on sustainability and conservation. We are humbled to share with you one of our recent accomplishments in water conservation.

In June 2023, K&D Landscaping landed on the front cover of Irrigation and Lighting Magazine. Our team was highlighted for implementing a smart irrigation system at the Seascapes Resort in Santa Cruz, California, which resulted in significant water savings. Over the course of 12 months, K&D reduced the clients water usage by 1 million gallons. This initiative not only demonstrates our commitment to sustainability but also helped the resort achieve approximately 30% cost savings, equating to \$35,000 on their water bills.

This achievement underscores the effectiveness of using smart irrigation controllers, which are designed to optimize water usage by adjusting irrigation schedules based on weather conditions and soil moisture levels. These upgrades help clients save both water and money, while promoting responsible water management practices.

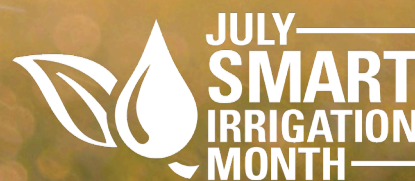
# Irrigation & Lighting

Vol. 2, Issue 2  
June 2023

The business magazine for  
irrigation & lighting contractors

## A million-gallon **UPGRADE**

K&D Landscaping used  
smart irrigation to save clients  
**1 million gallons of water.**



### INSIDE

Kansas pros deal with drought, p. 16

Check your lighting toolkit, p. 20

View smart controller comparison charts, p. 36



**BY KATIE NAVARRA**

**U**pgrading an irrigation system to use smart con-  
usage by 1 million gallons. That generated nearly 30%  
cost savings or about \$35,000 in water bills in one year,  
according to Justin White, CEO of K&D Landscaping.

“It’s hard to put an exact number on the dollar savings  
because of fines the resort was paying, but it was clear the  
reduction in water usage offset the budget of the entire  
project,” White says. “It was pretty exciting to provide  
that report to the ownership team.”

The resort spans 40 acres, watered with a nearly 30-year-  
old irrigation system operated and maintained by the resort  
maintenance staff. In 2021, K&D Landscaping secured the  
resort as a new maintenance client and pitched their newly  
established water management services.

“The resort’s aesthetic is very important to the owner-  
ship group as well as being stewards of the environment  
through conservation,” White says. “So, the project had to  
balance those two goals.”

As commercial properties look for cost savings amid  
inflation and increasing conservation legislation, smart  
irrigation controllers offer a viable solution. But more  
than being an option for solving these challenges, smart  
controllers offer equal benefits to those who install  
them, according to White.

“Smart controllers have been around for a long time  
and are maybe a bit intimidating for people to start with,”  
he says. “But they are probably one of the best tools we  
have as irrigators to save our clients money and water and  
also reduce our drive time and labor hours.”

**Selling the upgrade**

White could see the potential benefits, and the resort  
management team was on board too, but it took a solid  
sales process to seal the deal. Resorts, like most commer-  
cial properties, are cost-sensitive. White says selling the  
services started with preparing a financial analysis show-  
ing a projected return on investment for the proposed  
conversion of 16 traditional controllers to Wi-Fi-enabled  
smart controllers.

## TECHNOLOGY

**“I THINK SMART CONTROLLERS ARE AN UNDERUTILIZED PART OF OUR TOOL BELT THAT WE CAN ALL USE A LITTLE MORE, INCLUDING MY TEAM.” – Justin White, K&D Landscaping**

“We wanted a controller where we could remotely monitor water usage and the facilities manager could access water usage reports,” he explains.

The next step was conducting a full assessment of the existing irrigation system and plantings. The system had multiple meters, points of connection and controllers across 210 zones. In some zones, only half the valves worked. Other valves only operated manually.

That meant the project would not be a quick controller swap out. Instead, it was a complete irrigation infrastructure upgrade that required installing new wiring, repairing wire splices, changing spray head nozzles and transitioning some zones to low-volume drip irrigation.

“There were some curveballs throughout the project, and we were able to get everything up and running,” White says. “Everything is working great now, but there were some challenges we didn’t expect.”

One of the biggest challenges was making valves functional that hadn’t worked in three or four years. In addition,

the system had countless leaks that required repairs and upgrades. White says it took nearly four weeks to unwind what White described as a hodgepodge to get the system functioning properly.

“Once we got everything up and running, we realized that the Wi-Fi connectivity was not great all over the property,” he says. “Some controllers were not receiving the resort’s Wi-Fi signal.”

They chose to use wireless hotspots for the controllers out of the Wi-Fi range. While this client is accustomed to having tourists access their internet service, some commercial properties are concerned about cybersecurity. So, the hotspots can also be an alternative for clients with stricter internet security protocols as it is not linked to the internet connection used for business operations.

Once the system was fully functional, the team discovered that the fixes created the opposite impact they were striving for.

“We quickly realized that some areas were not really getting a lot of water that should have gotten water. So, (with the repairs) we were actually putting more water out as far as the volume of square footage because we fixed things,” White says. “That quickly became a challenge around the promise to save water.”

The team was forced to get technical on programming the controller to ensure they could water a greater square footage area while reducing total water usage. First, White’s team used the newly installed weather system to measure the site’s evapotranspiration rates and determine precisely how much water was necessary. Then, they used the data to make weekly scheduling adjustments on the controller.

“In previous years, the controllers operated on a seasonal basis where they would be turned on in the spring and maybe adjusted once or twice throughout the summer. But basically, they ran for a set rate of time all year,” he says.

The smart controllers were central to decreasing water consumption, but the project included several changes. For example,



Inside one year, K&D Landscaping’s upgrade and redesign of the irrigation system and landscaping at the Seaside Resort saved the client 1 million gallons of water for a 30% cost savings. Photos: K&D Landscaping

## TECHNOLOGY



Repairing the original system was one step toward the goal, which included smart irrigation upgrades and rethinking plant choices to select native options instead.

rotator nozzles replaced traditional spray nozzles. In addition, spray heads with check valves took the place of standard spray heads, and drip irrigation replaced several spray areas. While there are 1,000 to 2,000 heads currently on the property, White says that number will continue to fluctuate as more areas are swapped out with low-volume irrigation.

Additionally, select turf areas and planting beds with high water use plants were removed and transitioned to native plantings. White notes that the management team liked these alterations, given that the resort sits on the ocean coast and fits into the native scene of the area.

“The weekly adjustment, along with the added efficiencies in the system, really made for an overall water savings,” says White. “The landscaping ended up being a lot happier because it had the right amount of water instead of what would have typically been overwatered. As a result, things greened up nicely and plant health improved overall.”

White adds scheduling as an additional noteworthy challenge to consider when working on a property with public access, especially a busy one. Crews had to be invisible around guests and work had to be completed within specific hours to avoid disturbing them.

“It is a very active resort, and we needed to be there and get the work done without being seen,” he says. “We had to work different hours and maybe not as long of days as we like to get the work done.”

### Breaking into water management

K&D Landscaping is a \$15 million company with about 110 employees all dispatched out of one location. The company has offered irrigation services for years and is a nearly \$2.5 million operation staffed by eight employees, and it added water management services in 2020. White emphasizes the importance of establishing the service as a separate division that features a new logo that retained the company brand while differentiating water management through smart irrigation practices.

“One of the biggest benefits is the savings to the contractor,” he says. “Whether you’re the maintenance con-



tractor or the water manager for the property, you save a lot of money in time and fuel by not having to send your technicians out to the property to address the controller, whether it rained or something happened.”

With the proper programming, smart controllers will adjust the watering schedule based on those events. Not only does that save the client a lot of water, but White says the biggest cost savings are in labor.

“With the labor shortage, it’s a huge benefit,” he says. “We’ve actually started offering free upgrades to some of our clients because it’s cheaper for us to put in a smart controller for free than to manage a conventional controller. That’s been really impressive for us to see.”

White also sees the upgrades as a way to retain customers in a competitive market. Providing clients with the newest, latest and greatest technology demonstrates that you are looking out for their best interests.

“It just gives them a good feeling that they’ve got the right partner on board,” he adds. “They’re probably less apt to go out and shop your number, whether for maintenance, irrigation or water management, when you’re providing them with ongoing proactive solutions, versus just waiting for a sprinkler to break so you can go get a billable hour.”

## THE CREW HAD TO WORK AROUND RESORT GUESTS AND UPGRADE IRRIGATION SYSTEMS WITHOUT DISTURBING BUSINESS .

The company sees this as such a strong benefit that they were willing to take a hit on the project's renovation price. It was an opportunity to demonstrate value through extensive cost savings and conservation solutions to a new maintenance client.

"We didn't need to make much money on this project. We were more concerned about covering our costs and upgrading the system so it'd be easier for us to manage," he says. "But if you're doing a one-time install that you don't maintain, or you just don't offer the maintenance services, you want to make sure that you bid these projects carefully. Let the client know upfront it may cost more than expected." For example, he suggests adding a buffer to proposed budgets, as much as 20%-30% because without fail, you will encounter unexpected issues that impact the price. He also recommends building the quote around time and materials as well.

"When you go in with a higher-than-expected number and come in under budget and can tell them they have a credit coming back, it is a lot better than trying to convince them you need to get an extra \$10,000 or \$15,000 to cover the costs," he says.

White says the combined water reduction and cost savings at Seascape resort solidified his company's relationship with the new client not just as their water manager but as

their maintenance provider as well. For other contractors out there, he says these scenarios, where irrigation systems are managed in-house, are the ideal properties to target with water management initiatives.

"Historically, the maintenance staff has so much on their plate that irrigation programming is quite low on their priority list," he says. "If you're able to get in and convince them to take over their water management or to do a smart controller upgrade there is a lot of meat on the bones on those type of properties."

Since K&D Landscaping's big push on water management in 2021, only about 10% of their clients have opted in. But White is undeterred and is experimenting with different payment plans and options in 2023 to try and increase that number. His goal is to have 80% of clients utilizing the water management services by 2025.

"I think smart controllers are an underutilized part of our tool belt that we can all use a little more, including my team. We're going to audit all of our maintenance contractors right now," White says. "We're just basically offering free smart controllers for them because it's going to save us that much money this summer in programming costs."

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