

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: November 19, 2001

THROUGH: Municipal Services Committee

FROM: City Manager

SUBJECT: Proposed Program for Revitalizing Public Rights of Way in Pasadena, Including Increased Street Sweeping, Removal of Illegal Signs and Pick-up of Abandoned Bulky Items and Shopping Carts

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Approve a journal voucher recognizing \$70,561 from the unappropriated Sewer Fund balance and appropriating it to the Street Sweeping program (account number 101-764340) to implement enhanced street cleaning services and amend the fiscal year 2002 operating budget to increase 1.0 FTE Public Works Maintenance Worker III (Street Sweeper Operator); and
2. Amend the fiscal year 2002 operating budget to increase 5.0 FTEs (2.0 Public Works Maintenance Worker III; 2.0 Public Works Maintenance Worker II; and 1.0 Staff Assistant III) as part of the enhanced abandoned item collection program approved by City Council on September 24.
3. From the \$100,000 previously set aside for citywide clean-up programs, transfer \$15,000 to Public Affairs, account 142000, for community outreach, and \$85,000 to the Street Sweeping program (account number 101-764340) for expanded bulky item pick-up programs.

BACKGROUND

Pasadena has a reputation for being a beautiful city. Pasadena residents, businesses and staff take pride in clean, aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods, commercial areas and public rights of way. Many areas of Pasadena, however, are at risk of becoming or have become unsightly because of abandoned bulky items left in public rights of way, litter in the streets, illegally posted signs and abandoned shopping carts.

The recommended multidepartmental program is intended to respond to the increasing needs of the community.

Following are components of the program:

Increased Street Sweeping

Currently, four full-time sweeper operators are assigned to the Street Cleaning Section in the Public Works and Transportation Department. These employees collectively sweep more than 43,400 curb miles of streets annually. This represents the present goal to sweep 80% of city streets once every two weeks and the remaining 20% once every three weeks. Three of the sweeper operators work the night shift on regular routes. The day sweeper is responsible primarily for exempt streets, those posted for certain days and times due to night parking permits, and for the hot-spot sweeping program where extra sweeping is provided in areas with heavy leaf or berry fall, high winds, traffic accidents, construction debris, etc. These four sweepers provide enhanced sweeping at designated areas throughout the city as time permits. The present cost per curb mile swept is \$18.64, comparable to \$21 to \$23 per curb mile swept in private industry.

The adoption of a citywide standard is proposed whereby 100% of streets would be swept at least once every two weeks. In addition, enhanced street sweeping in Northwest Pasadena and other densely populated areas would be increased by 4,000 curb miles annually. This would require the addition of a fifth full-time sweeper operator (1.0 FTE), scheduled on a night route to most effectively sweep these areas when on-street parking is at a minimum. It would also require using one of the two back-up street sweeping vehicles as a full-time sweeper. In addition to complying with the anticipated new street sweeping requirements proposed as part of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, this increased level of street sweeping would be more convenient for residents. The additional resources would provide the ability to establish regular sweeping days and routes whereby residents would know that their street is always swept on a particular day every other week. Under this proposal, total curb miles swept annually would increase to 49,270 and the cost per curb mile swept would be \$19.32.

As part of this enhancement, staff is also proposing to purchase vehicle information modules for each street sweeper. These modules would produce a daily map based on electronic data sent to the Public Works Yards office via satellite and would show at the end of each day the streets on which the sweeper traveled, including time, speed, brooms up or down, number of passes on each side of the street, etc. This type of information would provide staff with objective data to respond to inquiries and/or complaints from residents and also provide increased accountability and efficiency for each sweeper. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) is in full agreement with this objective and signed a letter of agreement with the city on the issue of vehicle information modules in March 1999.

As stated above, new regulations are anticipated as part of NPDES. The City of Pasadena is a permittee to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, with the permit issued by the State of California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region. It is anticipated that NPDES regulators will mandate biweekly street sweeping for municipalities later this year or early next year as part of their continuing program to reduce materials

entering storm drains. Pasadena could be recognized as being ahead of the curve by implementing an increased level of street sweeping service at the direction of the City Council months prior to mandatory requirements.

Removal of Illegal Signs

Illegal signs have become a problem throughout the city, especially those on trees, light poles and other public property. Public Works field staff will remove signs while performing routine work at locations throughout the City Monday through Saturday. A Public Works Maintenance Worker II will also be assigned to work overtime four hours every Sunday morning to remove illegal signs at a cost of \$6,200 annually. These signs will be recorded with date, time, and location and submitted to Code Enforcement for possible citation. The overtime hours will be evaluated at the end of the fiscal year in order to assess the effectiveness of the program by determining if the public's behavior and practices have changed.

Abandoned Item Collection Program

Currently, the City will pick up bulky items left on the curb within 48 hours of notification, Monday through Friday. On Sept. 24, 2001, City Council approved additional funding to expand citywide clean-up programs. Using these funds, staff proposes to increase service to pick up items within 24 hours of notification, Monday through Saturday and increase enforcement against illegal dumping. Under the proposed program, a warning letter will be left at the nearest address and Code Enforcement will be notified of the illegal dumping. When there is repeated dumping at the same location, Code Enforcement and Public Works will track the number of incidents and a citation may be issued. If illegal dumping persists even after a citation is issued, the City Prosecutor's Office will be notified.

To implement this enhancement, an additional five FTE's are needed. The five positions are: 2.0 Public Works Maintenance Worker III; 2.0 Public Works Maintenance Worker II; and 1.0 Staff Assistant III. Approval of these positions will allow for two crews. Each crew will consist of a Maintenance Worker III (with a Class B license to drive a refuse packer) and a Maintenance Worker II who can load the items into the packer and also drive a stakebed truck to dispose of items that cannot be placed in the packer (for example, refrigerators, couches). The new Staff Assistant will respond to citizen calls, schedule appointments for bulky item collection, work with Code Enforcement to notify residents about illegal dumping, track problem areas, and send warning letters.

A unified effort among several City departments will also contribute to improving citywide clean-up efforts. Pasadena Police Department patrol officers regularly contact the Public Works Department to report bulky items that have been abandoned in the public right of way. In the future, Pasadena Water and Power meter readers and other City field personnel will also be enlisted to perform this service. In addition, Code Enforcement currently maintains a registry of vacant lots and vacant buildings that have a history of being problem properties. These properties are on the City's registry because they were cited twice within a 12 month period for property code violations. As such, code staff has immediate access to the property

owners and/or has the ability to summarily abate violations and bill the property owner for the work performed. Bulky items in front of these properties can be abated very quickly.

Removal of Abandoned Shopping Carts

This issue is more difficult to address because of certain socio-economic factors. Many people, often senior citizens and heads of households, who do not have private transportation often use the city's free ARTS buses or other means of public transportation to go to markets and then use shopping carts to bring the groceries home. Then they often abandon the shopping carts in the public right of way.

There are two major shopping cart retrieval services operating in Pasadena. Larger markets contract with the California Shopping Cart Retrieval Corporation, which was created in 1993 by the major grocery chains in Southern California. Target Stores contract with Hernandez Retrieval. There are smaller markets throughout the community, however, that do not have retrieval services.

Currently, when residents call the Code Enforcement Section of the Planning and Development Department to report carts that have been abandoned, staff contact the pick-up service. If the service is slow in responding, Public Works collects these carts, but is neither staffed nor has accommodations for providing this service on an ongoing basis. Consequently, other services in Public Works have been impacted. This issue requires additional research; staff will return to City Council with recommendations or notify City Council if an administrative solution has been reached.

Community Outreach

A comprehensive and carefully targeted communications plan has been developed including a special issue of *Pasadena In Focus* and communications through Neighborhood Connections, a recycling mailer, local media and the city's Web site. The cost of the special issue of *Pasadena in Focus* is \$15,000.

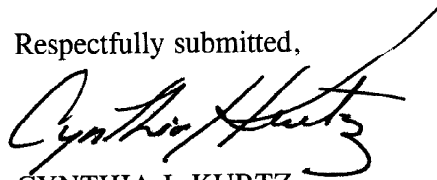
Performance Measures

To evaluate the recommended increase in services, city staff have identified eight locations throughout Pasadena (including parks, schools, commercial areas and neighborhoods) that will be inspected on a regular basis over a 12-month period to determine the level of improvements in street sweeping and removal of bulky items. The performance measures will also include staff response to community contacts on location and removal of bulky items. The implementation of the community outreach program will be evaluated based on results of inspections and by responses to specific questions added to the annual Pasadena Residents Survey.

FISCAL IMPACT

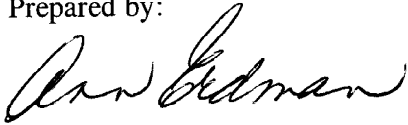
Approval of the above journal vouchers of \$170,561 will increase these programs for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2002. It is anticipated that 35% of the overtime cost for the removal of illegal signs will be recovered through citation revenues.

Respectfully submitted,



CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
City Manager

Prepared by:



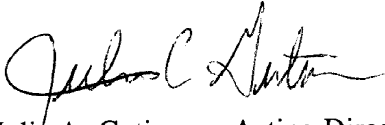
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Approved by:



N. Enrique Martinez
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Concurrence:



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