



Memorandum

TO: BUILDING BETTER
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

FROM: James R. Helmer
Albert Balagso

**SUBJECT: REGIONAL AND LOCAL
LITTER REDUCTION PROGRAMS**

DATE: 10-25-06

Approved

Date

RECOMMENDATION

Receive status report on the City of San José and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Litter Control and Landscape Maintenance Programs.

BACKGROUND

Since 2004, City of San José Department of Transportation (DOT) staff, along with staff from the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS), has been working with representatives from the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), and the California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to develop strategies to address litter removal from local freeway segments and interchanges. VTA's recently completed Litter Control and Landscape Maintenance Study produced a detailed analysis of the maintenance levels of the local freeway system and recommended the adoption of new standards for litter control and landscape maintenance for the South Bay Region.

These recommendations were adopted at the June 1, 2006 VTA Board of Directors meeting. In addition, the VTA Board action called for the development of a "Litter Control and Landscape Maintenance Pilot Program" to be implemented by VTA, in cooperation with Caltrans, and each Santa Clara County City. The primary goal of the VTA Pilot Program is to focus Caltrans' efforts to maintain the appearance of local freeways, improve the overall aesthetics of state-maintained roadways within Santa Clara County, and identify the additional level of resources necessary to provide the approved standard of maintenance on a regular basis. The Pilot Program intends to utilize existing resources and other personnel, including Alternate Work Program workers and Adopt-A-Highway volunteers, and to expand the program over time.

At the same time, significant litter removal efforts have been underway at the local level, which are aimed at supplementing Caltrans' efforts to maintain freeway interchanges. Directed by PRNS, the local clean-up effort has brought together, local residents, businesses, and law enforcement, in an attempt to support Caltrans maintenance efforts. This report provides a status report on both the local and regional clean-up programs.

ANALYSIS

Regional Efforts

At the direction of the VTA Board, VTA staff is working to initiate the 6-month Litter Removal and Landscape Maintenance Pilot Program intended to quantify the required level of effort necessary to maintain the local freeway system at a level established by the VTA’s Litter Control and Landscape Maintenance Study. The first task of the Pilot Program is to complete a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State of California’s Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to adopt the recommended parameters of the Pilot Program and identify the necessary level of resource allocation to adequately support litter control efforts on designated freeways within Santa Clara County. Recommended parameters of the Pilot Program include Interstate 880, from Route 85 to Route 237, and Route 101, from Route 85 to Route 237. A draft of the proposed MOU has been sent to Caltrans for their review and is awaiting their approval.

Local Efforts

PRNS staff has undertaken a similar litter removal pilot program at interchanges, on-ramps and off-ramps on the I-680 and I-280 corridor within San José City limits. As was reported at previous BBT meetings, PRNS has reallocated a limited number of resources from its Anti-Graffiti and Litter Program towards the cleanup of the interchanges along the I-680/280 segment for six months. City staff has coordinated their efforts with the VTA staff, so as to incorporate local clean-up efforts on freeway interchanges into the VTA Pilot Program and to encourage similar local participation in other cities in the County. The Highway Pilot Program began on April 13th and was completed on September 30th. The Anti-Graffiti and Litter program redeployed two staff members to remove litter from the on-ramps and the off-ramps on Highway 280/680. The staff supervises six to eight Alternate Work Program participants who pick up the litter. Caltrans then picks-up the bags.

The table below provides the statistical data to date and has been categorized by Round Trip, Number of Work Days, Number of Bags and Average Rating. The route begins from the Milpitas border traveling southbound on Highway 680; eventually Highway 680 becomes Highway 280 and the route ends at the border of Cupertino. The same route is reversed and thus completes a round trip. There are thirty-two on and off-ramps on this route. The number of workdays constitutes the amount of days each round trip lasts. The number of bags represents the amount of litterbags that are collected on each round trip. The average rating is based on the Keep America Beautiful Litter Index prior to the clean up (1= No litter, 2= Slightly Littered, 3= Littered, 4=Extremely Littered) and is an average rating for each round trip.

Round Trip	Beginning Date	Ending Date	Number of Work Days	Number of Bags	Average Rating
1	4-13-06	5-16-06	34	280	3.65
2	5-17-06	6-23-06	38	418	3.64
3	6-26-06	7-28-06	24	410	2.80
4	7-31-06	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

It is important to note that local litter clean-up efforts managed by DOT and Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) continue to be strong. Successful litter removal continues under the Anti-Graffiti and Litter Program in San José, driven by all participating Pick-Up San José organizations, agencies, and volunteers. The following describes the program's accomplishments to date.

1. Pick Up San José Volunteers (PUSJ):

- From July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006:
 - 3,934,831 - Total bags of litter picked up by all participating PUSJ organizations and volunteers.
 - 1,182- Total bags of litter removed by PUSJ volunteers.
 - 1,251- Total bags of litter picked up by one day clean up groups.
 - As of June 30, 2006:
 - 2,859 - Total number of PUSJ volunteers.
 - 136 - Total number of Hotspots adopted.
 - 299 - Total number of Hotspot volunteers.
2. If all the bags of litter picked up by all participating PUSJ organizations and volunteers from July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2006 (12,420,249) were lined up next to each other, the line would stretch for 7,057 miles.
3. Three litter educational commercials resumed running on several cable television channels on November 14th. From November 14th through June 30, 2006, the commercials have been run 1,149 times.

In conclusion, although it is still too early to determine the success of this effort, the following observations can be made:

- Staff has received many compliments regarding the improved condition
- Staff is removing a significant amount of litter
- Litter (unlike graffiti) does return quickly, from a variety of sources.
- Even though the AGLP has been able to maintain a respectable response time for Graffiti Hotline calls, the proactive graffiti abatement has been severely curtailed
- There has been a sharp increase in the amount of visible graffiti Citywide that is believed to be the result of the redeployment.

Regional and Local Coordination

A vital component of the implementation of the VTA Pilot Program by the VTA Board of Directors, called for the formation of an oversight committee, and establishes a process for the oversight committee to receive regular resource allocation and progress reports from Caltrans. For its local clean-up efforts PRNS had already established the Countywide Litter Technical Advisory Committee, which enjoyed broad, countywide representation. In an effort to further consolidate

clean-up activities, all participating agencies have agreed to utilize the existing oversight committee structure to monitor both the local and regional clean-up programs.

The Countywide Litter Technical Advisory Committee has taken on the challenge of creating a litter-free County. To accomplish this, four sub-committees have been established. Each committee will be responsible for over-seeing the implementation and operation of the VTA Pilot Program, as well as developing a Five Year Plan that will include two specific goals for each year. The four sub-committees will consist of representatives from participating cities, Santa Clara County, local school districts, VTA, Caltrans, the Office of the District Attorney and various law enforcement agencies.

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