



Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION &
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: Councilmember Sam Liccardo
Councilmember Xavier
Campos

SUBJECT: STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

DATE: May 2, 2011

APPROVE

5-2-11

RECOMMENDATION

Accept staff recommendation and the Storm Water Management Plan ("Plan"), with the following amendments:

1. Amend the plan to include among the "Implementation Tasks" listed in the Appendix and other relevant areas, "investigate the feasibility of utilizing stormwater fees to install appropriate 'no parking' signs to facilitate street sweeping in areas with high volumes of on-street parking," and "implement a sign-implementation plan to facilitate street sweeping."
2. Return to the Transportation and Environment Committee with an analysis of the feasibility and advisability of utilizing some portion of stormwater fees for the installation of "no parking" signs in neighborhoods heavily impacted by on-street parking, along with any reasonable alternatives.

BACKGROUND

We have recognized the causal connection between pollution flowing into our street storm drain inlets and the quality of the water in our creeks and Bay. For that reason, the City has undertaken to install 6,500 thermoplastic inlet markers near city storm drain inlets, to warn residents of the harms of dumping materials that will flow directly to our streams and creeks. To meet its Stormwater Permit requirements under the NDPES, the City will install approximately 4,500 more such markers, utilizing storm sewer fees.

Of course, street sweeping also serves to dramatically reduce the level of sediment, trash, and pollutants in our storm water system, by cleaning the on-street debris before it reaches the storm drain inlets. As the City's website notes, the residential street sweeping program provides some obvious, and some less apparent benefits:

The more obvious benefit is the collection and removal of paper, leaves, and other visible debris that collect in the gutters. In addition to being unsightly, this debris can block the catch basins and other storm water facilities, causing localized flooding during heavy rains. An equally important, but less

visible benefit is the removal of metal particles, and other hazardous waste products left by passing vehicles. Although they are virtually invisible, these particles can be extremely harmful to the fish and other wildlife, if they reach our creeks, our rivers, and eventually the bay. Street sweeping is an effective method of removing both the large and microscopic pollutants that collect on City streets.

Many neighborhoods with high rates of on-street parking, particularly on the East Side and Downtown, appear rarely swept, due the obstruction of street-sweeping equipment by on-street parked cars. One Spanish-speaking resident in the Washington Guadalupe neighborhood observed that President Obama must have cut funding for street sweeping, because her own Almaden Avenue hasn't been cleaned since his election in 2008. It is not lost on many of these residents that they live in lower-income neighborhoods, since on-street parking predominates in communities with substantial multifamily housing stock. Several residents have suggested that City Hall has deemed their neighborhoods less worthy of cleaning.

For several years, the Department of Transportation operated a program to install "no parking" signs for appropriate street-sweeping days on miles of neighborhood streets every year. Budget cuts have eliminated that program, however, leaving many neighborhoods without relief. We need to find a way to resume that program, and storm sewer fees provide a logical source of funding for it.

The employment of storm sewer fees for the installation of street sweeping/no parking signs will not have any impact on the General Fund. Of course, this approach will raise obvious questions under Proposition 218. In light of the rigorous demands of the NDPES permit, and given the long-recognized nexus between street sweeping and water quality, we should have little difficulty addressing these concerns.

We have raised this issue several times at prior Committee and Council meetings, most generally in some form of the question, "why not?" Absent a clear answer to that question, we should move forward.