

Contra Costa County Public Works Department


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Memo



DATE: October 13, 2016

TO: Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee

FROM: John Steere, Watershed Planner, County Watershed Program 

SUBJECT: **Proposal to Expand Adopt-A-Road to Include other County Infrastructure**

Recommendation: Expand Contra Costa County's existing Adopt-A-Road Program to include other County Infrastructure, including adoption of storm drains, flood control channels, and parks for trash cleanup. The Adopt-A-Road Program's expansion would be designed to encourage and engage residents and community groups to remove trash/litter from Storm Drain Inlets (SDI) and other infrastructure. This will help the County fulfill its trash reduction responsibilities under provision C.10 of the Municipal Regional Permit (MRP). This proposed expansion of Adopt-A-Road would simply build on its County-approved framework.

No new staffing would be required for the pilot program. Instead, we are proposing the redirecting of 10% to 15% of the workload of one of the County's watershed planners to coordinate with interested residents and groups in implementing Adopt-A-Spot. A start-up budget for the remainder of FY 2016-2017 of \$10,000 is recommended to support publication and distribution of public outreach materials (including brochures, signage, and T-shirts for neighborhoods/residents participating), fabrication of display materials, tools (including bags, gloves, and trash grabbers), and website development.

The pilot expansion program would involve several proposed steps: 1) briefing and soliciting partner groups and businesses to cosponsor through in-kind/volunteer labor or financial support (for example, underwriting of program T-shirts or other materials); 2) purchasing materials for periodic trash abatement efforts for initially targeted communities; 3) having community residents/partners sign the program agreement and liability waivers and training them regarding performance of visual assessments; and 4) encouraging business and community group partners to promote, support, and participate in Adopt-A-Road.

Background

Why Expand Adopt-A-Road? Interest in expanding the Adopt-A-Road Program has grown out of recognition that the most sustainable way to improve the cleanliness of streetscapes and to reduce their litter loads is through long-term resident-driven streetscape stewardship activities. The County's Program would look to the City of Oakland's successful 30-year Adopt a Spot program as a model for the expansion of its Adopt-A-Road Program. Oakland's program is a community-based partnership of the City of Oakland's Public Works Department with its residents. It enables the community to maintain specific public spaces by committing to regularly cleaning them for no less than once a year. For details of Oakland's program, go to www.Oaklandadoptspot.org. It is proposed that the County adapt elements of the Oakland program to: 1) provide the basis to foster regular street/neighborhood litter cleanups and 2) promote a greater sense of place and belonging to neighborhoods through constructive streetscape stewardship activities.

The County's expansion of Adopt-A-Road would also be designed to provide a community-building emphasis, since it would involve organizing neighbors to perform regular cleanups as a part of increasing their awareness of, and care for, where they live by providing incentives to encourage neighbors to participate and stay engaged. The Adopt-A-Road Program would be set up to provide interested residents sensible parameters and rewards for enhancing the quality of their neighborhoods through litter abatement and cleaning out plugged storm drain inlets.

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