

Councilmember Ben Bartlett
City of Berkeley, District 3

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 27th, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett and Councilmember Kate Harrison

Subject: Equitable Clean Streets Budget Referral: Funding for Staff to Conduct Bi-Weekly (Once Every Two Weeks) Residential Cleaning Services

RECOMMENDATION

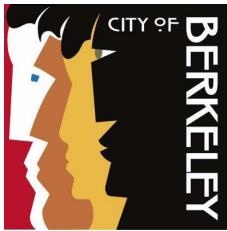
Refer to the November AAO budget process to allocate \$500,000 from the General Fund to require biweekly (once every two weeks) cleaning of populated encampment sites, major corridors, and encampments adjacent to residential neighborhoods throughout the City of Berkeley for approximately one year. The City should also partner with appropriate non-profit organizations to create work opportunities for homeless residents who can help City staff clean the streets on an ongoing basis.

CURRENT SITUATION

On September 21, 2020, Councilmember Bartlett submitted an item that would require bi-weekly (once every two weeks) cleaning of populated encampment sites and adjacent residential neighborhoods in Berkeley. On September 29, the Agenda and Rules Committee approved the Consent Calendar item to be discussed at the October 13 Council meeting. However, the aforementioned item does not specify if the City has the appropriate staff and financial capacity to implement additional street cleaning measures at this time. This item serves as a budgetary companion piece that will allocate \$500,000 from the General Fund to fund the costs of essential staff and supplies for these street cleaning services for at least one year.

Specifically, the goals of this equitable street cleaning initiative are to:

1. Promote public health and safety by mitigating trash hot spots and addressing the increased amount of trash in our community;
2. Reduce trash loads from municipal storm water sewer systems by complying with the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Board's MRP and trash requirements;
3. Create work opportunities for homeless residents and build staff capacity by partnering with non-profit organizations.



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BACKGROUND

The City of Berkeley currently mandates residential cleaning once a month and follows a sweeping schedule according to the street name. Residents are encouraged to rake their leaves for composting and avoid sweeping materials into streets or curbsides where debris could impede people's ability to safely travel along the sidewalks. However, our current sweeping schedule has not been sufficient in addressing issues of littering, illegally dumped materials, and encampments in certain areas throughout Berkeley, especially in the South Berkeley neighborhood.

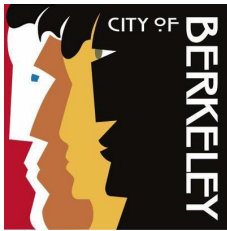
According to South Berkeley residents, their neighborhood has been littered with trash, which has become a safety and sanitary concern. Reports of discarded clothing and illegally dumped materials, such as couches and televisions, are common in South Berkeley, especially along the block of Martin Luther King Jr. Way in the corner between Alcatraz Avenue and 62nd Street. Other encampments, trash, and debris have also been located in the BART-owned area.

To promote health, safety, and cleanliness in Berkeley, the Council should allocate sufficient funding to hire additional street sweeping staff and provide more frequent residential cleaning services throughout the City. Since each neighborhood has different needs, the City and the street sweeping staff must use an equity lens to prioritize their cleaning services for areas with a greater number of encampments, such as South Berkeley. In addition to cleaning the surrounding area of encampments, the proposed biweekly (once every two weeks) cleaning services should focus on cleaning the individual camps as well. The City should also partner with non-profit organizations to build staff capacity, create work opportunities for homeless residents, and provide additional services to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The City should also employ its services at encampments on nearby non-City owned property, such as Caltrans. However, in these cases, the City should have the authority to bill the appropriate agency for the cost of staff and materials.

REVIEW OF EXISTING LAWS

The California State Water Board is one of six environmental entities operating under the authority of the California Environmental Protection Agency. The Board includes the



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State Water Resources Control Board and nine Regional Boards, including the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board.¹

In 2009, the San Francisco Regional Board issued a Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit (MRP).² The MRP covers stormwater discharges from municipalities and local agencies in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties, and the cities of Fairfield, Suisun City, and Vallejo. Specifically, the permit requires local governments to implement best management practices to control pollutants in stormwater. In addition, the permit includes Provision C.10, which requires permittees to implement trash load reduction control actions. The goal of this provision is to help reduce trash loads from municipal separate storm sewer systems by 40% by 2014, 70% by 2017, 80% by July 1, 2019, and 100% by 2022.³

The Regional Board has specified two methods for reducing trash discharge. The most direct means is the installation and maintenance of full trash capture devices, such as storm drain inlet screens and in-ground hydrodynamic separators. The other approach is to implement cleanup actions, such as street sweeping, installing and maintaining trash receptacles, and regularly sending crews to pick up litter.

In order to comply with the MRP and meet the trash requirements of Provision C.10, the Council must adopt this equitable street cleaning initiative and work towards reducing the debris and litter in our communities.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

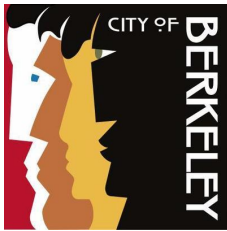
Debris and illegal dumping have exacerbated the safety, sanitary, and environmental issues of the Berkeley community. To protect the safety and health of our residents, residential cleaning of the camps and the adjacent neighborhoods of the encampments in the city should be conducted at least once every two weeks. Equitable residential cleaning services would ensure that Berkeley residents, especially those in South Berkeley, have safe and sanitary areas for residential and commercial purposes.

In addition, the City must comply with the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Board's MRP and effectively control pollutant discharge. Compliance with the MRP will

¹ https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterboards_map.html

² https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/stormwater/mrp.html

³ https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/stormwater/MRP/Prov_C10.html



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mitigate trash hot spots, enhance water quality, and benefit our city's ecosystems and surrounding communities.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Staff time and General Fund impact of \$500,000. The funding is expected to cover the cost of staff and supplies for additional cleaning services for at least one year. For encampments on non-City owned property, the City would save on financial resources by billing the appropriate agency for the cost of staff and materials.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Bi-weekly (once every two weeks) residential cleanings would remove the litter populating the camps and streets, which would reduce the risk of trash clogging storm drain systems or polluting the waterways. This initiative works towards meeting the trash requirements of the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Board's MRP. Compliance with the MRP will enhance water quality, benefit the City's ecosystems and surrounding communities, and minimize the impacts of trash discharges on our environment. Litter can also carry unsanitary germs and thus, increase the ability to contract diseases. These issues must be prevented and mitigated, especially during a time when people are vulnerable to becoming infected with coronavirus.

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