

CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

FILED
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

2010 JAN 13 PM 6:03

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Dan Lindheim
FROM: Public Works Agency
DATE: January 26, 2010

RE: **A Progress Report On Caltrans Maintenance Activities in the City Of Oakland**

In December 2005, the City of Oakland and Caltrans signed a ten-year Letter of Understanding (LOU) which formalizes the structure for the ongoing relationship between the City and Caltrans in the maintenance of Caltrans properties. The LOU aims to maximize the clean-up activities by Caltrans within Oakland, while recognizing the limited public resources that are available. From 2005 through 2007 there were four semi-annual reports. The first annual report was presented last year. This report marks the second annual progress report.

Caltrans has complied with all of the tasks agreed to in the LOU, including:

- Meeting monthly and responding in a timely manner to issues brought to them
- Providing monthly maintenance records for all activities listed in the LOU

Highlights from Caltrans from October 2008 through October 2009 included:

- 580/Grand pigeon project - completed modifications under 580 between Grand and Lakeshore to eliminate pigeon droppings.
- Coordinated response to vandalism and homeless encampments along Highway 980 (23rd Street and MLK to the Grove Shafter Park.), with the Oakland Police Department and Oakland Rangers, Public Works Agency, provider of homeless services and BART Police
- Support from the Union Pacific Railroad and BART Police
- Continued use by Caltrans of the Civicorps Schools for cleanups
- Caltrans has committed to removing trash at least monthly from all freeways in Oakland

The Public Works Agency continues to take service requests via e-mail to pwacallcenter@oaklandnet.com or by phone at the Public Works Call Center at 510-615-5566.

FISCAL IMPACT

This is an informational progress report only; therefore there is no direct fiscal impact.

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BACKGROUND

On December 21, 2005, as a result of the public nuisance action filed by the City, Caltrans signed a ten-year monitoring and maintenance commitment with the City of Oakland. As required under this Letter of Understanding (LOU):

- ◆ Caltrans and Oakland established a joint working group to meet monthly to discuss, coordinate, prioritize and strategize Caltrans clean up activities in Oakland
- ◆ Caltrans submits monthly maintenance records of their work in Oakland
- ◆ The City and Caltrans submit semi-annual progress reports for two years and then annual reports on abatement activities in Oakland to the City Council
- ◆ Caltrans provided a comprehensive listing of all Caltrans properties in Oakland so that the information can be integrated into the City's computerized mapping system
- ◆ Lessees of Caltrans properties are being held accountable to the LOU.

From July through December of 2005, City and Caltrans representatives held informal monthly meetings to discuss projects of mutual interest. In January 2006, after the LOU was signed, this informal group became the Working Group established by the LOU. The Working Group has met monthly to encourage communication and coordinate abatement efforts of blighted conditions such as illegal dumping, litter, graffiti, overgrown vegetation and other fire and health safety hazards in the City. The monthly meetings are attended by representatives of Caltrans, the City's Public Works Agency, Oakland Police Department, Community and Economic Development Agency, and Fire Department. Representatives bring their lists of Caltrans issues to the table. The meetings include discussions of citizens' concerns regarding homeless encampments, litter, fire abatement and the appearance of their neighborhoods. All issues are discussed and a timetable for resolution by Caltrans is established. As a result of the LOU and Working Group, joint inspections and cleanups of various sites have been performed more quickly and on a more regular basis. Communication has greatly improved and Caltrans has become an active partner in cleaning up Oakland.

At each monthly meeting since the LOU was signed, Caltrans representatives have provided monthly reports, which include results for each abatement activity in the City:

- ◆ rights of way swept
- ◆ overgrown vegetation removed
- ◆ graffiti removed
- ◆ illegal dumping removed
- ◆ signs installed, fencing installed or repaired
- ◆ homeless encampments removed
- ◆ pavement project coordination and
- ◆ other cooperative or joint projects

The activities in Caltrans' reports include their regular activities, as well as responses to lists provided by City staff of locations that require attention regarding weeds, homeless encampments, high litter areas, potholes, and fence repair.

Blight issues such as homeless encampments have been abated in a timely manner. Caltrans has taken immediate action to remove combustible material around parcels in the Wildfire Prevention Assessment District that were under direct threat of fire damage. Routine maintenance such as street sweeping, graffiti removal, fence repair, and litter removal has also been performed in a timely manner. In addition, Caltrans' Adopt-A-Highway program has 20 volunteer groups that pick up litter in Oakland. This has reduced complaints of unsightly trash along the freeway.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The attached *Exhibit A* is Caltrans' Progress Report for July 2008 through June 2009. The following table highlights those accomplishments as well as those of previous years.

Task	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Rights-of-way swept in miles	2,922	1,934	4,079	3,993
Overgrown vegetation removed in acres	65.75	155.75	110.45	76.75
Graffiti removed in square feet	108,978	126,757	153,045	241,647
Fences repaired in linear feet	5,050	5,811	3,167	3,712
Homeless encampments removed	140	446	723	812
Adopt-a-Highway by litter bags collected	1,454	1,957	2,080	2,534

During the twelve months covered by this report, the Caltrans Working Group has resolved complaints from the public in the many categories covered above. The Working Group has also worked on long term solutions to particularly stubborn issues by being innovative and experimenting with new ideas. A monthly schedule for homeless camp removal is prepared by Caltrans and the work is supported by the California Highway Patrol and the Oakland Police Department. Graffiti has been cleaned on an expedited schedule to remove tags quickly from high impact areas to lessen competition from other taggers.

In addition to the on-going activities, the Working Group's priorities for 2009-10 include:

- ◆ Supporting the BART Retrofit Project in West and North Oakland
- ◆ Trash removal throughout the 880/High Street corridor
- ◆ Working with the City Attorney's Office Prosecution Team to validate gang graffiti for future enforcement

- ◆ Investigating signage used in other California jurisdictions to deter illegal dumping and homeless encampments
- ◆ Continuing to contract with the Civicorps School for cleanups along the freeways in Oakland.

Caltrans has also committed to removing trash at least monthly from all freeway on and off ramps in Oakland.

Staff believes that Caltrans continues to demonstrate its commitment to work collaboratively with the City by not only responding to and abating blight throughout Oakland in a timely manner but also by partnering and problem-solving on other projects of mutual interest.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: The involvement of Caltrans staff in litter and debris removal and beautification will improve the physical appearance of the City of Oakland and will help stimulate economic growth, retain business, and promote civic pride.

Environmental: Removal of dumped materials and litter will reduce the amount of debris that enters the storm drain system, polluting our creeks and waterways.

Social Equity: Enhancement of communication and coordination between the City and Caltrans will improve the appearance of the City and enhance the overall living conditions and safety of all Oakland residents.


DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

The decreased amount of litter and increased beautification will improve the quality of life and safety for the disabled and senior citizens.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Accept this progress report on the Caltrans Letter of Understanding.

Respectfully submitted,

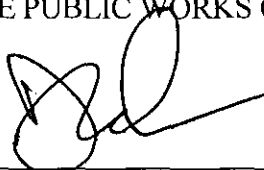


Vitaly B. Troyan, P.E.
Interim Director, Public Works Agency

Reviewed by:
Brooke A. Levin
Assistant Director, Public Works Agency
Department of Facilities & Environment

Prepared by:
Jocelyn Combs
Public Works Agency
Department of Facilities & Environment

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO
THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE:



Office of the City Administrator

Attachment:
Exhibit A – Caltrans Progress Report, July 2008 through June, 2009

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Public Works Committee
January 26, 2010

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
111 GRAND AVENUE
P. O. BOX 23660
OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660



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PROGRESS REPORT

July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009

The Progress Report is a summary of "Attachment A" reports that have been submitted for review at the monthly meetings with the City of Oakland, Public Works Department. This is the annual report as required by the Letter of Understanding between the State of California, Department of Transportation and the City of Oakland, Public Works Department.

During the past year the Department and the City of Oakland continued to work together effectively to solve identified problems. Complaints and issues are discussed and prioritized. As in previous years, the homeless issue continues to be the main focal point. The Department cleared 812 homeless camps at a cost of nearly one hundred and thirty-three thousand dollars during this period. The Department shares a schedule with the City each month for a joint effort in the removal of the homeless from state and city property. This cooperative cleanup effort between the Department and City of Oakland has produced favorable and lasting results.

Grove Shafter Park # 3 that borders Interstate 580 is one of these areas that have improved greatly as a result of our joint efforts. To the delight of the nearby residents who in the past several years have been overwhelmed by the sheer number of homeless who have called this area home. In the past year, the Department has removed overgrown brush and trimmed the tree line back along our shared fence line in an effort to expose the area and discourage illegal encampments. The right of way fence was repaired and all access gates were secured. The City of Oakland Public Works Department removed the picnic enclosure where the homeless congregated at all hours of the day and they secured the restroom facility that was a haven for all manner of illicit activities. Litter removal intervals on both sides of the fence were increased by both agencies and as a result the area looks cleaner. Increased patrolling of the area by the California Highway Patrol, the Oakland Police Department, and the Oakland Park Rangers has made the area safer than it has been in previous years. As a result of these combined efforts, the homeless encampments in this one particular area has been reduced to nearly nothing.

Graffiti is also another serious and daunting change facing the Department. In the past year, our maintenance crews cleaned a total of 241,647 square feet of graffiti within the City limits of Oakland. This number represents an 88,600 square foot increase from the previous year. We estimate the number of illegal tagging will continue to increase in the coming years due to an ever increasing number of graffiti coming from local gangs as they compete for territory.

Faced with these new challenges, the Department and the City of Oakland continue to work together with the same resolve and determination as ever. Grove Shafter Park is a shining example of this group effort.

Listed in the table below is a breakdown of maintenance activities from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009:

Activity	Production	Cost
Right of Way Swept	3,993 Miles Swept	\$313,422.00
Overgrown Vegetation./ Fire Break	76.75 Acres Pruned	\$457,233.00
Graffiti Removal	241,647 Sq. Ft. Cleaned	\$59,736.00
Fencing Repaired	3,712 Linear Feet	\$93,860.00
Homeless Removal	812 Sites Cleared	\$132,967.00
Adopt-A-Hwy	2,534 Litter Bags	\$20,068.00
		Total \$1,077,286.00