

CITY OF OAKLAND
AGENDA REPORT

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TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly
FROM: Public Works Agency
DATE: September 28, 2004

**RE: AN INFORMATIONAL REPORT ON THE KEEP OAKLAND BEAUTIFUL
VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

SUMMARY

This report highlights accomplishments and provides an overview of the work activities of the Keep Oakland Beautiful (KOB) programs. The KOB program resides in the Public Works Agency (PWA) Department of Facilities & Environment, Keep Oakland Clean and Beautiful Division. KOB is responsible for coordinating PWA volunteer programs such as the Adopt-a-Spot/Maintain-a-Drain Programs, community cleanups, Earth Day and the Daffodil Planting Program.

On October 9, 2003, Oakland became an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful (KAB), Inc., a national nonprofit organization that supports local, national, and international beautification efforts. As a KAB affiliate, Oakland can leverage public and private funds and volunteer resources to establish partnerships with local schools, organizations, businesses and others to support education and enhance efforts.

PWA created a 15-member Advisory Board (Board) to encourage volunteerism, recommend program enhancements, and promote outreach throughout Oakland. Advisory board members were recruited citywide through an application process that invited committed volunteers to take a more formal role. Over 70 applications were received for these positions. KOB is committed to the mission of its Board "to create opportunities through education and community involvement for a beautiful, clean and green Oakland."

This is an informational report, and no action is necessary.

FISCAL IMPACT

Since this report is informational only, no fiscal impacts are included.

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BACKGROUND

Over the past years, there have been ongoing efforts to improve the physical appearance of the City, reinstall a sense of pride in the community, invite new investment, and make Oakland a safer and cleaner place. The goals of these initiatives involved coordinating, evaluating and enhancing existing efforts and developing new ones aimed at cleaning up the city and actively reaching out to engage the community in a partnership that results in a cleaner Oakland. Major components of these initiatives included media strategies that included public service announcements, promotion of the “Don’t Trash Oakland, It’s Home” message, billboards, wallsapes and magazine advertising.

The KOB program is an expansion of past initiatives and others that have existed in the Public Works Agency for many years. In the past, the program was called We Mean Clean, Clean Oakland Program and Clean Community System. The goals of these initiatives have always been to encourage volunteers to assist in the City’s efforts to fight grime, blight and trash. KOB was developed to not only involve volunteers in tackling the issues of trash and grime, but to also focus on beautification.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The KOB program offers a wide range of opportunities for volunteers to clean and green their neighborhoods. Whether they are interested in cleaning up their block or maintaining a storm drain, KOB has resources to help. KOB has several programs that provide coordination, materials and support for volunteer cleanup and beautifications activities. These programs include the new Daffodil Planting Program, Adopt-a-Spot, Maintain-a-Drain, community cleanups and citywide cleanup events (e.g., Earth Day). KOB staff also supports the Team Oakland Youth Employment Project, which employs youth to clean and beautify Oakland’s neighborhoods.

Daffodil Planting Program

The Daffodil Planting Program is the newest citywide initiative to promote volunteerism and beautification. During the Fall of 2004, our goal is to plant 25,000 daffodil bulbs. This program has proven successful by many other cities throughout the country. Volunteers are requested to plant the bulbs in public locations (e.g., parks and other public spaces). Home Depot has donated the bulbs and the Board is working closely with groups that participated in Earth Day, Adopt-a-Spot and Maintain-a-Drain programs to ensure broad participation. KOB is currently accepting applications for those groups/individuals interested in planting daffodil bulbs. The application is available via the website at www.keeпоaklandbeautiful.org. During the spring of 2005, we will celebrate the arrival of daffodil blooms all over Oakland.

Adopt-a-Spot

This program allows for individuals or groups to play an active role in beautifying any community area that is in need of extra attention by adopting a location or spot. The City requires a one-year commitment, provides volunteers with tools, gloves, and orange safety vests while working, and also arranges for bag pick up. We currently have about 440 volunteers actively participating in the program and 134 locations that have been adopted.

This fall, Keep Oakland Beautiful will launch a new Adopt-a-Spot sign and replace the current dated signs that are located throughout Oakland. KOB's goal is to acknowledge current volunteers and inspire greater participation in the program through the adoption and promotion of a new sign. After six months of successful participation in the Adopt-a-Spot program, the PWA will place an official sign at the site. Staff will be evaluating expansion of this successful program in the parks, medians and open space in conjunction with the recent reorganization of Parks to PWA.

Maintain-a-Drain

As a result of heavy rains each winter, large quantities of garbage, litter and pollution clog storm drains and cause flooding throughout the city. Volunteers are encouraged to maintain storm drains in their community. The City requires a one-year commitment and provides volunteers with rain gear and a rake to keep for cleaning storm drain inlets in their neighborhood. Currently, we have 150 volunteers participating in this program.

This fall on Creek-to-Bay Day, September 18, 2004 KOB will kick off the Maintain-a-Drain program on International Boulevard from 2nd Avenue to 108th. Over 7 groups will participate in storm drain cleaning. Stenciling stating "*No Dumping! Drains to the Bay*" will be done on the sidewalk where drains are located. As we approach the rainy season, our aim is not only to clean the drains, but also to encourage volunteers citywide to make a long-term commitment towards drain maintenance.

Community Cleanups

Various community groups participate in City supported cleanup and beautification activities throughout the year. To support these efforts, staff provides organizational assistance, tools and safety materials, and bag disposal. Cleanup and beautification efforts this year has included litter cleanups and beautification through the planting of flowers and shrubs. As part of the newly re-organized PWA, an outreach plan is being developed to define goals and increase volunteerism throughout the city in public spaces including parks and creek locations. During fiscal year 2003-2004, there were 235 community cleanups, special projects and block parties with 5,183 volunteers participating and approximately 14,841 bags of trash were collected.

Earth Day 2004

On Saturday, April 24, 2004, KOB coordinated the annual citywide Earth Day event. Volunteers and City staff organized over 65 projects in neighborhoods, commercial districts, parks, schools and creeks. Over 2,500 volunteers participated in Earth Day projects this year giving more than 7,500 hours of volunteer commitment.

A number of corporate sponsors supported our citywide event this year including: KBLX 102.9, ANG Newspaper/Oakland Tribune, CH2MHill, Oakland Parents Literacy Project, Home Depot, Coliseum Lexus, Boss Limousines, Clif Bar, and Albertson's.

The goal of Earth Day is to encourage volunteers to get involved with a cleanup/beautification through a one-day activity with the goal of long-term commitments and involvement in the Adopt-a-Spot program, ongoing community cleanups or other volunteer activities.

Team Oakland Program

The Team Oakland program is a youth employment and environmental service-learning program designed to clean and green the city while providing employment opportunities for youth. The Youth Employment Partnership (YEP) has been the City's primary contractor for the Team Oakland program since its inception in 1993. YEP partners with the University of California, Berkeley to enhance the educational component and overall impact of the program.

The KOB Program in the Public Works Agency coordinates the Team Oakland program. The KOB Coordinator and Specialist oversee the Team Oakland program to ensure that youth focus on appropriate cleanup and beautification efforts. KOB provides supervision, program and project direction and contract administration of the Team Oakland program. YEP staffs Team Oakland with 110 young people each summer. In 2003, Team Oakland collected 70.09 tons of trash, the data for the summer of 2004 is unavailable at this time.

Litter Index

In November 2001, the City Manager's Office convened with staff and community volunteers to develop a Litter Index for the city, a baseline measure of the city's cleanliness. In June 2004, KOB completed Oakland's second litter index. KAB's Litter Index visually assesses the community and is an essential part of the planning and education process to address the littered condition of cities nationwide. The data gathered by the volunteers who conducted this Litter Index will further help us determine the types of litter prevention we need to implement locally.

The goal of the Litter Index is to arrive at an overall community score for Oakland. To perform the Litter Index, the 53.3 square mile landmass of the City of Oakland was assessed according to the boundaries of our six Service Delivery System (SDS) areas. Each SDS area was subdivided into Police Community Service Areas (CSA), and each CSA area was actually visually assessed and scored by a team of volunteers that had been trained in the Litter Index four-point scoring system with 1 being no litter and 4 extremely littered.

On Friday June 11, 2004 our City's overall scored was 2.3. In November 2001 our overall score was 2.4, a reduction of .1 percent. Although the reduction is small, it is an indication that the City's efforts are moving toward the goal of becoming cleaner.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: The involvement of volunteers in litter reduction 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: When litter and debris accumulate in storm drain inlets it can lead to flooding. The decrease in dumped materials and litter will lessen the amount of debris that enters the storm drain system polluting our creeks, Lake Merritt and the Estuary. It also reduces vector opportunities for pests and vermin.

Social Equity: The improvements of cleanliness and beautification will enhance the overall living conditions and safety of all Oakland residents. Encouraging personal responsibility and pride of ownership while working closely with volunteers ensures equity throughout the city.

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

No action is requested since this is an informational report.

Respectfully submitted,


RAUL GODINEZ II, P.E.
Director, Public Works Agency

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

Prepared by:
Felicia Verdin, Keep Oakland Beautiful Coordinator
Keep Oakland Clean and Beautiful

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO
THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE


OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

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