



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: October 16, 2006 REPORT NO. 06-154

ATTENTION: Council President and City Council
Docket of October 17, 2006

SUBJECT: Cost Effective Provision of "Take Back the Streets" Scope of Services

REFERENCE:

REQUESTED ACTION: None - Information Only

SUMMARY:

Approximately twelve years ago, several Council Districts instituted the Take Back the Streets (TBS) program utilizing their CDBG funds to pay Alpha Project for the Homeless (Alpha Project), to help clean up identified low/moderate income communities. While the contract was administered by Community and Economic Development, the daily contact for Alpha Project was from the Council offices, which contacted Alpha Project directly and identified the tasks to be carried out. While these included cleanups of private property and brush/weed removal, many of the waste removal tasks took place between the curb and the private property line and from private property abutting the alley rights of way.

Early in 2006 the City was informed by HUD that effective June 30, 2006 (the expiration date of the Alpha Project contract) the use of CDBG funds for the activities specified in the contract with Alpha Project would no longer be allowed. During the FY2007 budget discussions on May 30, 2006, the City Council modified the FY07 budget to allocate \$300,000 from the General Fund to continue services like those offered in TBS. During the Council hearing, the question was posed whether these services would be offered Citywide or in specific Council districts. Elmer Heap, Environmental Services Director, replied that every Council district would benefit from the program, Alpha Project would be involved, and services would be provided in an appropriate manner consistent with regulations.

Environmental Services Department (ESD) pursued developing and administering a "Take Back the Streets" (TBS) type program using the \$300,000 budgeted in FY2007 for this purpose. Concerns included using City monies to provide services on private property, ensuring consistent enforcement of the Municipal Code throughout the City, and appropriate oversight of service contracts. Feedback from Council offices was used to determine the mix of services to be provided. These include:

1. **Picking up appliances and e-waste at Community Cleanups** - This service had been discontinued due to additional handling costs related to new regulatory requirements and will now be reinstated.
2. **Additional Community Cleanups** - this is one of ESD's most popular services and the Department had not been able to meet the demand. ESD has proposed adding 26 more

cleanups annually. Normally, County Community Service workers are utilized for this service and if they are not available, Alpha Project will be used.

3. **Weed abatement** – the Streets Division already had a \$125,000 contract with Alpha Project for weed abatement thus it was more efficient to transfer funds to that contract rather than create a new one.
4. **Hardship abatement** - Council offices indicated there is a need for property cleanup assistance for some low-income residents. Thus, as the fourth component, we included 25 Hardship Abatements in the mix of services. Due to the City Attorney's concern over the use of public funds for private benefit, this program has clearly defined parameters restricting services to the most needy on a first-come, first-served basis.
5. **Illegal dump abatement.**

The decision regarding the scope and provision of the illegal dump abatement program element was complicated by the transfer of the funding source to the General Fund as well as by Labor requirements.

Use of General Funds:

ESD enforces the City waste codes and removes illegal dumps from alley and street rights-of-way. It is appropriate to utilize General Funds for this purpose, and the service is to be provided on a City-wide basis. If waste (illegal dumps and/or litter) is found between a concrete curb line and the private property line or on private property which abuts an alley right-of-way, the City's policy has been to hold the adjacent property owner responsible pursuant to SDMC 54.0208 (a) & (b) and require the owner to remove the waste. The use of the General Fund is not appropriate for dump abatement on private property.

Labor Requirements:

During discussions of the program elements, it was brought to ESD's attention by the City Attorney's office that Article 50 of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Local 127 might apply; this was confirmed by the Labor Relations Office and required ESD to utilize ESD staff to provide the service in question if City staff were found to be the most cost effective. In order to continue services while discussions with Local 127 proceeded and the service costs were analyzed, a contract for illegal dump removal was established with Alpha Project on a month-to-month basis.

On July 20, 2006, the Labor Relations Office sent a letter to Joan Raymond, President of Local 127, formally requesting to meet and confer on this issue. The initial meeting occurred on July 28th and a subsequent meeting occurred on Monday, August 14th. At the initial meeting, Local 127 requested the City consider providing all TBS services using City forces by developing a pool of laborers. However, in discussions with the Personnel Department, it became evident that this was not feasible due to the complexity and costs associated with administering such a small labor pool.

In order to obtain objective data to compare City forces to Alpha Project when abating illegal dumps, ESD utilized the contract extension with Alpha Project as a pilot to gather data on their costs and effectiveness as compared to ESD's costs.

ESD maintains performance data on an ongoing basis and this was used in a comparison with Alpha Project. To obtain comparable data for Alpha Project, ESD designed parameters and communicated them to Alpha Project. ESD provided Alpha Project all of the abatement requests they could handle on a daily basis and Alpha Project provided a weekly billing with all requested information. The following table shows the results of the pilot.

ESD*/Alpha Project Pilot Results				
	Average Abatements Completed Per Day	Average Tons Removed Per Day	Cost Per Ton Removed	Cost Per Completed Abatement
Alpha Project**	10	1.86	\$407	\$73
ESD***	17 - 22	2.55 – 5.26	\$141 - \$291	\$35 - \$41

* ESD range attributable to higher efficiency when working in one area

** Data is from 7/17/06 to 9/30/06

*** Data is from June/July 2006 and Aug 2/3

The ESD costs reflected in the above analysis include personnel costs including benefits and the assignment charges associated with City vehicles. The key performance parameters for Alpha Project in the above table represent the average over a two-month period. They did not alter measurably during the term of the pilot, i.e. the Average Tons Removed per Day ranged from 1.65 to 1.79; the Cost per Ton Removed ranged from \$416 to \$428; and the Cost per Completed Abatement ranged from \$62 to \$74. A second calculation was done for ESD when we were informed by Alpha Project that they were not going to have staff available for August 2 and 3 and we substituted our forces working in the same concentrated area that was staffed by Alpha Project. It can be seen that the cost effectiveness of ESD improved even more in this instance than when the ESD crew was covering the whole city. This information was presented at the August 14th meeting. Local 127 agreed with the proposed program.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The final program developed by ESD is designed to use the General Fund monies to maximum efficacy while providing a desired mix of program services as defined by City Council input. With respect to the delivery of illegal dump abatement services, the above table shows that ESD is approximately twice as efficient as Alpha Project.

The program elements and the allocation of the \$300,000 General Fund budget are summarized in the table below.

Allocation	Program Components				
	Community Cleanups (appliances, e-waste)	26 Extra Mini Cleanups	Weed Abatement (Streets utilizing AP)	25 Hardship Abatements (AP or City Staff)	Illegal Dump Abatements
ESD (\$201,500)	\$35,000	\$11,000	0	0	\$155,500
Alpha Project (\$98,500)	0	0	\$40,000	\$21,000	\$37,500 (thru end of Sept)
<i>\$300,000</i>	<i>\$35,000</i>	<i>\$11,000</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>	<i>\$21,000</i>	<i>\$193,000</i>

This program is structured to meet the needs of the different Council Districts while meeting the legal requirements of the Municipal Code and ensuring the proper oversight of the expenditure of City funds for TBS-type services.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION:

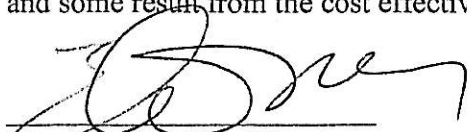
Staff anticipated that discussions with the council offices to solicit input on the scope of services to be provided in the reconstituted "Take Back the Streets" program was necessary and conducted outreach to individual council offices.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS:

None

KEY STAKEHOLDERS & PROJECTED IMPACTS:

As discussed in the report above, City residents, Alpha Project, Local 127, and City employees will be impacted by this program. Some of the changes result from the new source of funding and some result from the cost effectiveness study.


 Elmer L. Heap, Jr., Director
 Environmental Services Department

 R.F. Haas, Deputy Chief
 Public Works