



DATE: May 14, 2018
TO: Council Sustainability Committee
FROM: Director of Utilities & Environmental Services
SUBJECT Possible Participation in Idle Free Bay Area Campaign

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee reviews and comments on this report and makes a recommendation regarding an Idle Free Bay Area Proclamation for Council adoption. Additionally, that the Committee gives direction to staff regarding a possible idle-free ordinance.

BACKGROUND

Hayward is a member of the Southern Alameda County Spare the Air Resource Team, which is a program of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. The Team meets quarterly and includes environmental and transportation program staff from the cities of Fremont, Newark, Union City, Hayward as well as staff from school districts, AC Transit, TransForm, and Supervisor Scott Haggerty’s office. The Team has a small budget and works to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and traffic congestion by promoting commute alternatives and educating drivers about the expense and waste of unnecessary idling.

General Plan Policies – Hayward’s General Plan, adopted on July 1, 2014, includes the following policies related to idling:

Policy NR-2.8: Reduced Emissions for City Operations and Commutes. The City shall promote reduced idling, trip reduction, routing for efficiency, and the use of public transportation, carpooling, and alternate modes of transportation for operating City departments and City employees.

Program M-9: Improved Traffic Flow Program. The City shall work with Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Alameda County Transportation Commission to plan and obtain funding for projects that improve traffic flow on arterials and reduce vehicle idling.

Staff has drafted an Administrative Rule regarding idling in City vehicles, which is currently pending review.

DISCUSSION

Vehicle idling is often unnecessary and can occur while waiting to pick up children from school, sitting in line in a drive-through, or using a phone at the start or end of a trip.

According to the IdleFreeBayArea website, the top reasons to be idle free are:

- Save money – 30 seconds of idling uses more fuel than restarting the engine
- Breathe easier – car exhaust can aggravate asthma and decrease lung function – especially in children
- Keep the sky blue – car exhaust is the number one source of summertime air pollution in the Bay Area
- Reduce your carbon footprint

Proclamation – The Southern Alameda County Spare the Air Resource Team is promoting the Idle Free Bay Area campaign. The Team distributes information at community events, helps to post signs around schools and workplaces, and works with the Safe Routes to Schools program to encourage walking and biking. The District developed a video that will be run in movie theaters in Southern Alameda County this summer. Staff plans to share the short video with the Committee during the meeting.

Several jurisdictions have adopted proclamations to promote the idle-free campaign, including the Walnut Creek, Martinez, and Pittsburg school districts, the County of Contra Costa, and the City of Martinez. These proclamations and associated media coverage are available at <https://idlefreebayarea.org/news/>. A sample proclamation is included as Attachment II, is intended to raise awareness about idling and to encourage people to turn off vehicles when they would otherwise idle more than 30 seconds. Upon direction from the Committee, staff will prepare a proclamation for an upcoming Council meeting.

Potential Ordinance – Several cities in California and the United States have adopted idle-free ordinances to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality. According to IdleFreeBayArea.org, car exhaust is the number one source of summertime air pollution in the Bay Area. Although an ordinance can provide modest emissions reductions, it can also support a jurisdiction's climate action plan because reducing idling also saves fuel. There are also health-benefits associated with reducing idling. Car exhaust includes particulate matter (PM) and hydrocarbons, which have been linked to asthma, cancer, and cardiovascular problems.

In December 2017, the City of Palo Alto's Policy and Services Committee considered a draft anti-idling ordinance. The Committee discussed the merits of the ordinance and whether it would be effective given the staff's limited enforcement capacity. In Fall 2017, the City of Berkeley's City Council directed the Community Environmental Advisory Commission to explore developing an anti-idling ordinance.

Cities in Utah and the Midwest have had anti-idling ordinances for almost ten years. Attachment III lists the differences between these ordinances including the allowed idling time and enforcement. The time limit for idling ranged from one minute to five minutes and enforcement varies from voluntary compliance to a \$200 fine.

Every ordinance includes an exception for emergency vehicles responding to emergency situations. Additional exceptions included for vehicles containing K9 or other animals, to defrost windshields, when temperatures are below zero or above ninety degrees Fahrenheit, when necessary to operate auxiliary equipment, and to perform diagnostic tests and maintenance on vehicles. Attachment III is an example of a flyer that is used by the City of Minneapolis to educate people about their anti-idling ordinance.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Reducing idling saves fuel, which can save some money. Even with an ordinance and extensive outreach, staff expects that savings to community members would be minimal.

FISCAL IMPACT

Outreach associated with an idle free campaign could be handled by existing staff with no impact to the General Fund or enterprise funds.

If signage is installed around schools and other idling hotspots, then a cost estimate of \$15,000 for 100 signs in 50 locations is anticipated. These funds are not included in the FY 2019 operating budget and staff would need to return to Council to request an appropriation.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

This agenda item supports the Complete Communities Strategic Initiative. The purpose of the Complete Communities Strategic Initiative is to create and support structures, services and amenities to provide inclusive and equitable access with the goal of becoming a thriving and promising place to live, work and play for all. This item supports the following goal and objective:

Goal 1: Improve quality of life for residents, business owners, and community members in all Hayward neighborhoods

Objective 4: Create resilient and sustainable neighborhoods.

SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

Encouraging the community to go “idle-free” will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve local air quality.

NEXT STEPS

Upon direction from the Committee, staff will prepare a proclamation for an upcoming Council meeting. Also, upon direction from the Committee, staff could prepare a recommendation regarding a possible ordinance for an upcoming Committee meeting.

Prepared by: Erik Pearson, Environmental Services Manager

Recommended by: Alex Ameri, Director of Utilities & Environmental Services

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. McAdoo', written in a cursive style.

Kelly McAdoo, City Manager