



DATE: January 13, 2020

TO: Council Sustainability Committee

FROM: Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: Discuss Recommendations From the Public Litter Can Assessment

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee reviews and comments on this report and provides direction to staff.

SUMMARY

Following the direction of the Committee at the July 8, 2019, Council Sustainability Committee meeting, staff analyzed the costs of increasing the number of public litter cans in Hayward and reported at the September 17, 2019 Council Sustainability Committee meeting that the cost of purchasing 1,000 new public litter cans could range from \$1.2 to \$3.4 million. Staff also referenced an ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of public litter cans in Hayward because often litter was observed very close to public cans and some cans attract the dumping of household trash.

This report provides an update on the findings from the public litter cans assessment. Staff recommends the purchase of 25 Big Belly public litter cans in areas most-affected by litter in the City, that staff work with the Keep Hayward Clean and Green Task Force to increase volunteer litter collection programs, that staff researches the feasibility of an Adopt-a-Drain program, and that staff investigates the possibility of expanding the Downtown Streets Team and the Downtown Hayward Improvement Association litter collection efforts.

BACKGROUND

One of Council's priorities is to keep the City clean. The City spends more than \$2 million per year on litter collection. Efforts include removal of dumped trash, street sweeping and cleaning storm drains. The City also sponsors weekend clean-up events, the annual clean-up day at Weekes Park, and the Adopt-a-Block Program.

Additionally, over the years, the Council has enacted policies to support this priority. In July of 2011, Council enacted a ban on the use of polystyrene packaging for take-out food to

address the issue of plastic pollution in Hayward and adopted Chapter 5, Article 11 of the Hayward Municipal Code “Polystyrene Foam Disposable Food Service Ware Prohibited; Recyclable or Compostable Food Service Ware Required.” In 2012, Council adopted the County-wide ordinance banning single-use plastic bags.

Litter reduction has been discussed by Council, the Sustainability Committee, the Keep Hayward Clean and Green Task Force, and the City Council Budget and Finance Committee. Summaries of some of those discussions held since 2015 were provided in the July 8, 2019 [staff report](#)¹.

DISCUSSION

This report provides an update on the findings from the limited small-scale assessment of public litter cans conducted by staff and offers recommendations on managing litter in Hayward.

From late July 2019, through late November 2019, staff identified and walked ten locations in the City known to experience litter, at least once a month . The ten locations were identified with the help of Water Pollution Source Control and Maintenance Services staff who dedicate time to removing litter in Hayward. Staff monitored the amount and type of litter as well as the fullness of public litter cans during this five-month period. Additionally, staff monitored the amount of litter found in the proximity of litter cans compared to the presence of litter more than 30 feet from litter cans. The ten locations monitored for litter are listed below.

1. A Street between Victory Lane & Santa Clara Street
2. Hesperian Blvd and W. Winton Road near Starbucks
3. Tennyson Road between Huntwood Road & Ruus Road
4. Tennyson Road at Hesperian near McDonalds
5. Patrick Ave. along Weekes Park from Gomer Street to Roosevelt Ave.
6. B Street between Foothill Blvd & 4th Street
7. Whitman Street between Tennyson Road to the pedestrian overpass bridge
8. Huntwood Road between Tennyson Road & Ventura Ave.
9. Jackson Street and Fletcher Lane near McDonalds
10. Dixon Street between Valle Vista Avenue and the South Hayward BART station

The amount of litter at a location was determined by assigning an A to D grade with A meaning the location had no litter and D meaning the location was very littered². Seven of the ten locations received C or D grades most often. Nine of the ten locations experienced

¹ <https://hayward.legistar.com/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=707046&GUID=15522BD2-9DF6-496F-86A6-4C37741D990C&Options=&Search=>

² Staff used the protocol developed by the Alameda County Clean Water Program to assess and grade each area.

litter within 10 feet of a public litter can. The most common types of litter reported were fast food containers, food wrappers (chips bags and candy wrappers), and cigarette butts. The presence of public litter cans did not seem to relate to the amount of litter in a location as much as the presence of certain types of structures or activity. The areas most affected by litter were close to fast food establishment, commercial retail activity, multi-family dwellings, vacant properties, railroad tracks, and freeways. Staff noted that the public litter cans are being used and therefore beneficial, and that it is likely without the public litter cans there would be an increased amount of litter.

In Hayward, there are currently an estimated 300 public litter cans disbursed throughout the City. The number of cans fluctuate as some are removed due to damage or other reasons, and staff installs cans in new areas. There are three styles of cans: aggregate heavy concrete cans, black metal cans, and the Big Belly dual recycling and trash cans. Waste Management of Alameda County (WMAC) services the majority of the public litter cans as part of their franchise agreement with Hayward. The franchise agreement allows the City to have up to 400 public litter cans serviced by WMAC, and WMAC estimates it costs approximately \$38 per month to service a public litter can once per week, and about \$200 per month to service public litter can five times per week.

WMAC experienced challenges recently retaining trained staff to service the public litter cans in Hayward, resulting in several cans receiving inadequate service and overflowing. The problem started in late summer 2019, was resolved in early November 2019, and an adequate level of service has been reinstated. During this five-month assessment, staff noted that overflowing public cans drastically increased the amount of litter near cans. WMAC services public litter cans every weekday, Monday through Friday, in the following areas: Downtown , Tennyson Road east of 880, Jackson Street, Whitman Road, south Tyrrell Ave, and south Patrick Ave. Public litter cans in the other areas of the City are serviced by WMAC three times each week: every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Recommendation

The cost of deploying significantly more public cans does not guarantee a significant decrease in litter, but there are proven litter collection efforts currently and staff recommends increasing these litter collection efforts in Hayward. Specifically, the Downtown Streets Team and Downtown Hayward Improvement Association's litter collection efforts have demonstrated a decrease in litter in the downtown area. The Downtown Streets Team has expanded its collection efforts along Tennyson Road showing similar results. In addition, staff can research means to increase promotion of the Adopt-a-Block program and explore the feasibility of starting an Adopt-a-Drain program, where volunteer groups adopt a storm drain in Hayward.

Although the franchise agreement with WMAC allows the City to add up to 100 more public cans, staff recommends adding only up to 25 Big Belly style cans because other styles of cans have recently experienced issues. For example, the aggregate cans are tipped over and destroyed by vandals. Additionally, most of the aggregate cans do not have lids and the lack of a lid makes it easier for people to place household trash in a can. The lids from the black metal

cans are often missing, and it has been reported that the lids from black metal cans have been thrown through shop windows. In contrast, Big Belly cans have a standup mailbox-like opening through which trash is placed. The opening is small enough to deter the placement of large bags of household waste while meeting its purpose as a trash can. Big Belly cans also bolt to the ground, preventing them from being knocked over.

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACTS

Cleaner public spaces can create a positive economic impact. Providing clean, pleasant areas for people to visit can increase the vitality of an area, and the potential of visitors patronizing local businesses. The removal of litter has the potential to benefit local businesses, especially retail, economically.

The total estimated cost to purchase 25 Big Belly cans is \$74,000 (\$2,950 per unit) and would come from the solid waste program funds, therefore having no General Fund impact. If other options are preferred, staff would develop more specific plans with associated costs.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

This agenda item supports the Complete Communities Strategic Initiative. The purpose of the Complete Communities strategy 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 objectives:

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

Objective 2: Foster a sense of place and support neighborhood pride.

Objective 3: Increase collaboration with businesses, non-profits and neighborhood groups on placemaking projects.

SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

Litter reduction can have the following sustainability features or benefits:

Water: Efficiency and conservation. Reducing litter will not minimize the use of water but will result cleaner water flowing to creeks and the Bay.

Solid Waste: Waste reduction and diversion. Reducing litter will not directly minimize the volume of material sent to a landfill.

PUBLIC CONTACT

No public outreach was conducted regarding the public litter can assessment.

NEXT STEPS

If the Committee supports staffs' recommendation, staff will:

- Place 25 Big Belly public litter cans in areas most-affected by litter in the City;
- Work with the Keep Hayward Clean and Green Task Force to increase volunteer litter collection programs such as cleanup events and the Adopt-a-Block program;
- research the feasibility of an Adopt-a-Drain program, and
- Investigate the possibility of expanding the Downtown Streets Team and the Downtown Hayward Improvement Association litter collection efforts.

Prepared by: Jeff Krump, Solid Waste Program Manager

Recommended by: Alex Ameri, Director of Public Works

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. McAdoo', written over a horizontal line.

Kelly McAdoo, City Manager