

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fresno County Transportation Authority
FROM: Mike Leonardo, Executive Director
DATE: February 14, 2018
SUBJECT: FCTA Litter Abatement Program

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the Executive Director to begin further discussions with Fresno COG and Caltrans regarding establishment of a Litter Abatement Program within the Measure C Expenditure Plan

DISCUSSION: Litter along the region's freeways, highways and major arterials has been a perpetual issue for Fresno County and its communities. While not limited to State freeways and highways, these facilities are a major component and the most visible portion of the problem.

Litter on State highways in Fresno County is currently removed through a variety of resources and programs, including: Adopt-A-Highway volunteers, Adult Offenders Program, California Department of Correctional and Rehabilitation parolee program, prison inmates and Caltrans staff.

The inventory of State highway miles in Fresno County has increased significantly since the mid-1980s, due in large part to new highway funding at the State and Federal levels as well as the significant contribution Measure C made towards the State highway system. Unfortunately, State resources for highway maintenance have not kept pace with that growth.

Caltrans has increased its efforts on litter and weed abatement activities, including an offer to match local funds on a one-for-one basis up to \$250,000 per year for two years to increase litter removal activities. While a two-year program will not provide a permanent solution, it will allow for experimentation on different clean-up strategies and models, and might be the catalyst for further funding opportunities.

Alternatives

FCOG and FCTA staff have developed and discussed several alternatives for enhancing litter removal activities. These included:

1. Forming a regional Service Authority for Freeways/Expressways (SAFE) or some similar vehicle that would provide a long-term funding source for enhanced litter control.
2. If passed, AB 1395 would require that Caltrans develop a litter, debris and graffiti clean-up plan for the State's highways and freeways. At this point AB 1395 does not include any funding for enhanced efforts.
3. Redirection of some SB 1 local maintenance revenues to litter abatement. It is unclear if litter abatement would be an eligible criterion under the SB 1 program, so additional legislation could be necessary.
4. Incentivize local agencies to develop a litter abatement program(s) through matching funds.

Alternative 1 and 2 may provide long-term solutions to the litter abatement issue; however, neither meet the immediate need and would not be available in time to match the Caltrans funding.

Alternative 3 has potential to meet the immediate needs if a change in the legislation is not required. If a legislative change is required, this alternative would be grouped with Alternatives 1 and 2 as a potential long-term solution.

Alternative 4 appears to be the most attractive near-term solution and will be discussed further below.

Proposal

It is critical that this program not be funded exclusively with Caltrans and Measure C funding. Litter is a community problem, and community resources should be applied. Engaging community resources also helps ensure local ownership and commitment to the program, and provides flexibility to develop a program geared toward local needs. Further, Measure C funding is always leveraged whenever possible to ensure that revenues from other sources are captured. The proposal outlined below is consistent with these objectives.

Two Year Program	
Source	Amount
Caltrans	\$250,000
FCTA Litter Abatement Program	\$125,000
Local Match	\$125,000
TOTAL	\$500,000

In addition to establishing the Measure C Litter Abatement Program (LAP), this alternative would also include a modification to the eligibility criteria for the Measure C Local

Transportation Flexible Program to include litter abatement. This would make Local Flexible funding eligible to match LAP funding. Other potential sources of local matching funds could include general funds, street maintenance funds, solid waste funds, or SB1 funds if allowable. Under this proposal, the local contribution could include time and material and is not limited to a strictly financial contribution.

In order to maximize the Caltrans match, this program would be limited to State highways.

LAP funding would be available to any eligible agency within Fresno County. If requests for LAP funding exceed \$125,000 annually, a competitive program could be established, or the available LAP funds could be distributed on a formula basis using similar population and road mileage percentages as used for distribution of the Local Transportation Program funds. Unused LAP funds would roll forward.

LAP funding could come from the Regional Transportation Program, with the nexus being litter as an additional maintenance by-product of the County's freeway/expressway/highway system expansion (due in part to the Regional Transportation Program). Maintenance resources for these facilities simply have not kept pace with that expansion. There are also one or two small, underutilized sub-programs within the Measure that could provide LAP funding.

Recommendation

Authorize the Executive Director to begin further discussions with Fresno COG and Caltrans regarding establishment of a Litter Abatement Program within the Measure C Expenditure Plan.

Other Considerations

Alternative 1 of this report considers the possibility of implementing a regional SAFE program or a similar funding vehicle that could be a long-term source of funding for enhanced litter abatement. Before launching an effort to establish this type of program, it would be beneficial to determine the public's level of concern with litter, and their willingness to generate the funding necessary to help abate litter. FCTA and COG staff are proposing to partner on a public outreach program that would help decision makers gauge the public's level of interest in this topic.