



Progressive Alliance Center Mendocino

~ Democracy for All ~

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To: Public Works & Facilities Committee
Fr: Rod Jones
Da: March 6, 2017
Re: Agenda Item 17-115 for March 15, 2017

To help further this discussion, it seemed useful to provide some comments prior to the meeting. These are only my personal comments and others in PAC may differ or have additional thoughts. I expect at least three or four others to attend.

Tom has done a really good job of assembling the updated report and seems to have thoroughly embraced this topic. We appreciate his effort and the City's willingness to come to grips with this problem. Please accept these suggestions as constructive:

1. Consider further the appropriate program nomenclature.

Is this really designed to adopt a "street" or is it more focused on the surrounding areas? How hackneyed is the terminology "Adopt-a-[whatever]"? Maybe something more particular and "newer" (feeling more innovative) might be in order. For example, "Streetside Stewards Program." If the emphasis is caring for sidewalks, gutters, and storm drains/inlets/manholes, maybe the term should be more reflective of that scope?

2. Bring volunteer involvement front-and-center.

Tom properly recognizes the importance of this factor. I'd urge you to consider a bit more comprehensive approach. "Arm" your volunteers with "labeled" caps and brooms/pans that identifies them publicly as part of a "city team." Visibility is better for the Council, I'd think, and would likely encourage further involvement from volunteers, i.e. outreach. I'm bringing a simple prototype of these tools to the meeting for your inspection and consideration.

3. Consider not separating out the prospect of new ordinances (MTWA-like).

Tom's helpfully notes the existing ordinances but I'm not sure I'd characterize them as "substantial regulations." They seem more like the first step and are far from comprehensive. If you separate out consideration, while useful in the short term, it makes it more likely that enactment of a comprehensive ordinance will be forgotten and lost at the wayside. If nothing else, allow PAC to prepare a couple of sample ordinances that might accompany your report to the Council so that at least the water can be tested as part of one overall discussion. I believe the City could effect a useful stick-and-carrot approach that would gain consensus.

4. Signage is useful but can also be a pollutant.

Tom suggests adding signage to cigarette receptacles, which seems like an entirely appropriate direction. However, I'd urge you to keep aesthetics in mind also in terms of the number and size of signs (and also to avoid duplication). Simply worded and "kind" reminders may go further than more stern messages. Asking smokers to "help keep the area clean" might produce compliance better than a warning about fines.

5. Perhaps not include the "clean parks" initiative as part of this program.

The effort to enhance Guest House Park is totally commendable. But I'm not sure about the fusion of the two efforts and worry that it might lead to public confusion. Some folks might wish to engage in one or the other efforts but not both. They could be left uncertain exactly what they are signing up for. It seems that a separate identity for something like "City Parks Stewards" would be preferred.

6. Engage staff/union to avoid the phantom of job loss.

I've learned over time that any level of volunteer labor attached to any bureaucracy that has paid staff can raise the concern of job-stealing and layoffs. Undoubtedly, you are already aware of this but I think it's worth clarifying to insure harmony at home.

Sample concept (for cap face & tool labeling):

City of Fort Bragg
Streetside Steward