



TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Michael P. Slevin III, P.E., Director; Environmental Services *M.P.S.*
COPY: Economic Development Committee
PRESENTER: Lewis Griffith, Division Manager; Environmental Services
Andrew Torres, Assistant Division Manager; Environmental Services
SUBJECT: Ensuring a Safe, Clean, and Sanitary Downtown
DATE: November 24, 2020

PRESENTATION TYPE:
Informational Briefing

SUMMARY:
Environmental Services Solid Waste (SW) staff will present possible options for a test case to provide a cleaner downtown, improved curb appeal and overall sanitation.

BACKGROUND:
At the 2019 Council Strategic Planning Work Session, the City Council identified a list of policy priorities for the year. The Economic Development Committee members prioritized a commitment to review options to ensure a safe, clean and sanitary downtown. A safe, clean and sanitary downtown is an economic driver. Based on identified council priorities, Environmental Services has reviewed and identified options that might help address council concerns.

ISSUE:
Concerns have been raised from residents, business owners, and the Downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA) for the need to tackle growing concerns of garbage, blight and homeless activity in downtown Tacoma. Records of 311 reports show an increase in reports of solid waste and public safety concerns.

ALTERNATIVES:
There are three viable test case options to enhance the SW collection system and improve the downtown blight, litter, curb appeal and overall sanitation. Each of the test case options also includes 28 new and improved pedestrian litter containers. The centralized SW collection system is the preferred system and is financially conducive for the ratepayer, however transitioning to a daily SW collection system and/or evening collection system are potential alternatives.

After meeting with the downtown BIA stakeholders to review the three test cases, they have provided feedback supporting a centralized SW collections system (email attached). The group recognized that the centralized SW system would help to meet the streetscape improvements goals, reduce blight and litter downtown and potentially reduce and/or limit their SW utility rate.

FISCAL IMPACT:
The estimated fiscal impact to the SW fund for a one-year test case of the pedestrian litter cans and the centralized collection system is \$665,000. This includes both startup capital, operation and maintenance costs. Funding for the pedestrian litter cans was approved in 2020 and is included in the SW Fund 4200 budget. The funding will be re-appropriated into the department's 2021-2022 budget.



Funding for the centralized collection system is not currently budgeted. The capital projects planned in the SW Fund for next biennium can be reprioritized to allocate the required funding for the one-time capital costs associated with this test case. Utility rates/revenue will be evaluated during the test case and adjusted, if necessary, in the subsequent biennium. This project may require property acquisition or lease costs that are not included in the above estimate.

Category	Centralized Collection System	Pedestrian Litter Cans
Startup Capital	\$410,000	\$130,000
1-year test case O&M	\$75,000	\$50,000

RECOMMENDATION:

SW staff recommends the centralized SW collection system model, including 28 new and improved pedestrian litter containers. As a test case, this project is expected to help address both the City Council’s and the downtown BIA’s concerns of excessive blight and litter in the downtown corridor. By removing the unsightly curbside garbage and recycle containers in the test area, we will see an immediate improvement to the city’s streetscape. Installing new and improved pedestrian litter containers will also improve the curb appeal and eliminate opportunities for misuse of these containers and scavenging. With greater capacity and strategic placement, the pedestrian litter containers are expected to improve litter in general. Throughout the project, staff will analyze the garbage, blight and homeless related 311 requests as well as monitor the streetscape to measure the improvements in the test area.

ATTACHMENT:

Email from David Schroedel RE: Theater District Solid Waste Service