

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: June 20, 2019

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso 
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No.: 19-0002-S100
Assignment No.: 19-06-0596

SUBJECT: Graffiti Abatement and Bulky Item Removal Competitive Grant Program

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached Resolution to include in the City's 2019-2020 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for a \$1 million State General Fund appropriation to the California Workforce Development Board for the creation of a competitive grant program to assist communities with graffiti abatement and bulky item removal.

SUMMARY

In a letter to the State Senate's Committee on Budget & Fiscal Review dated April 10, 2019, State Senator Hertzberg proposed for inclusion in the State's Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget a \$1 million competitive grant program to assist communities with graffiti abatement and bulky item removal. Currently, the Office of Community Beautification (OCB) contracts with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to perform community beautification services.

According to Resolution (Rodriguez – Blumenfield), introduced on May 31, 2019, unabated graffiti, litter, and bulky items negatively impact quality of life and residents' sense of community pride, safety, and cohesion. Per the Resolution, additional funding to support community beautification efforts, such as graffiti, litter, and bulky item removal, could expand the impact of the City's existing contracts with CBOs. The Resolution seeks an official position of the City to support a \$1 million appropriation from the State General Fund for a competitive grant program to assist communities with graffiti abatement and bulky item removal.

BACKGROUND

OCB has contracted with CBOs since 1989 for community beautification services, including graffiti removal, sidewalk cleaning, weed abatement, and tree planting/maintenance. OCB also supports graffiti abatement work by providing paint and supplies to CBOs. According to an OCB report dated April 12, 2019, approximately 150 jobs are provided through OCB service contracts.

In 2016, the Director of the California Department of Industrial Relations determined that graffiti removal services are public works projects and workers contracted for graffiti abatement must be paid the prevailing wage for painting contractors. This determination has significantly increased the cost of using contractors for graffiti removal. The OCB has indicated that the increased cost of the contracting for graffiti removal has led to a 10 percent decline in the square footage of graffiti removed citywide. The Department of Public Works has been seeking a new classification with

the Department of Industrial Relations for graffiti abatement workers and the 2019-20 Fiscal Year Adopted Budget funds the City's graffiti removal program at the prior year's levels.

Local governments are primarily responsible for the costs of neighborhood beautification services and a competitive grant program could potentially complement the City's graffiti removal program while maintaining and creating workforce development opportunities through CBOs engaged in community beautification efforts.

The proposal requested a \$1 million appropriation from State General Fund to the California Workforce Development Board for development of the grant program. The proposal stated that grant awards would be provided to CBOs that have an agreement with a city that has a bona fide pre-apprenticeship training program for graffiti abatement. The proposal was not included in the State budget bill, which was passed by both the State Senate and Assembly on June 13, 2019.



Matthew Shade
Analyst

Attachments: 1. Resolution
 2. Hertzberg letter

RULES, ELECTIONS & INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), by definition, have a vested interest in working in, and with, the community to improve neighborhood conditions and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles has contracted with CBOs since 1989 to provide neighborhood beautification services, including graffiti abatement, sidewalk cleaning, and weed abatement; and

WHEREAS, unabated graffiti, litter, and bulky items negatively impact quality of life and residents' sense of community pride, safety, and community cohesion; and

WHEREAS, CBOs connect people to their neighborhoods, empowering youth who benefit from employment experience, and community investment; and

WHEREAS, Senator Hertzberg has proposed a \$1,000,000 appropriation to the California Workforce Development Board for the development of a competitive grant program that would assist communities with graffiti abatement and bulky item removal; and

WHEREAS, additional funding to support community beautification efforts lead by CBOs in partnership with cities could expand the reach and impact of their collaborative efforts; and

WHEREAS, leveraging the services of CBOs with existing contracts with cities that have bona fide pre-apprenticeship training programs for graffiti abatement also creates a workforce development opportunities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2019-2020 State Legislation Program SUPPORT for a \$1,000,000 State General Fund appropriation to the California Workforce Development Board for the creation of a competitive grant program to assist communities with graffiti abatement and bulky item removal.

PRESENTED BY:


MONICA RODRIGUEZ
Councilwoman, 7th District

SECONDED BY:



MAY 31 2019

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California State Senate

SENATOR ROBERT M. HERTZBERG

MAJORITY LEADER

REPRESENTING THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY



COMMITTEES
NATURAL RESOURCES
AND WATER
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CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
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AND COMMUNICATIONS
GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE
JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT

April 10, 2019

The Honorable Holly J. Mitchell
Chair, Committee on Budget & Fiscal Review
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Community Beautification Grant - Budget Proposal

Dear Senator Mitchell,

I write to request that the Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee approve a **\$1,000,000 appropriation to the California Workforce Development Board** for the development of a competitive grant program that would assist communities with graffiti abatement and bulky item removal.

Grant awards would be provided to a community-based organization (CBO) that has an agreement with a city that has a bona fide preapprenticeship training program for graffiti abatement. In order to leverage these funds as much as possible, these CBO's would need to coordinate with their city to make sure services are not being duplicated and are not supplanting existing services.

In 1989, the City of Los Angeles first contracted with community based organizations to provide graffiti abatement services. Community based organizations, by definition, have a vested interest in improving community conditions. Many graffiti contractors evolved from neighborhood watch groups or were established nonprofits chosen because of their connections to their community. Leaving graffiti unabated in neighborhoods lowers home prices, increases vandalism, decreases the sense of safety, strains social cohesion and affects the perceptions of self-worth in school-aged children.

CBO's also partner with city departments for bulky item pickup and trash removal in industrial and economically depressed areas. This allows programs to target areas that need the services the most.

CBO's in Los Angeles have provided graffiti abatement services for almost three decades connecting people to their neighborhoods, empowering youth who benefit from employment experience, and community investment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Hertzberg".

Senator Bob Hertzberg
18th Senate District