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SOUTHEAST SAN DIEGO ENVIRONMENTAL TASK FORCE REPORT

A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to describe the background and to summarize the recommendations of the Southeast San Diego Environmental Task Force. The Task Force was initiated by the Community Development Director on November 23, 1970 at the request of Councilman Leon Williams. The Task Force consists of representatives from eleven City departments, and five community organizations. Included are representatives from: Building Inspection, Citizen's Assistance, City Council, Community Development, Engineering, Fire Department, Model Cities, Planning Department, Police Department, Public Relations, Public Works, Zoning Administration, Southeast San Diego Development Committee, Urban League of San Diego, Inc., Neighborhood House, and NAACP. Overall coordination is provided by the Community Development representative, while sub-coordination is provided by two subcommittee chairmen from he Public Works and City Planning Departments.

Basically, the purpose of the Task Force was to:

1. Investigate and define physical environmental problems in a selected 10± block area in the Southeast San Diego Model Neighborhood;
2. Investigate existing manpower, resources, codes, and ordinances, and develop possible immediate, intermediate, and long range solutions to environmental deficiencies;
3. Coordinate proposals with local organizations, i.e., Urban League and the Model Cities committee;

4. Prepare an action report for City Council approval; and

5. Initiate implementation and monitoring procedures.

B. PROCEDURE

So far the Task Force has had four regular meetings and one bus tour. A fifth meeting will be held on Friday, February 5, 1971 at the Community Concourse to discuss recommendations to be evaluated by the community representatives before going to City Council conference. Desirably, the City Manager's office and the City Planning Department will have evaluated the preliminary recommendations before this meeting. If the Task Force recommendations are acceptable, it is recommended that they be presented at an open City Council hearing for action, after which, a public relations program be initiated in the pilot area.

During the bus tour the Task Force selected the proposed one hundred acre (15± small blocks) pilot area bounded by 32nd Street to the west, Imperial Avenue to the north, Wabash Boulevard to the east, and Interstate 5 to the south. The pilot area was selected because it is representative of the major physical problems found in other environmentally deficient areas of the City. (See Enclosure I for an analysis of the pilot area.)

After the pilot area was selected, the Task Force was divided into two subcommittees in order to simplify field and code studies and reporting procedures. Subcommittee I, coordinated by the Sanitation Division representative from Public Works, consists of representatives from Building Inspection, Fire Department, Police Department, and Street Division of Public Works. Subcommittee II is coordinated by the City Planning representative and consists

of representatives from Model Cities, Engineering, and the Zoning Administration Division of the City Planning Department.

Although the departments represented by Team I deal primarily with community complaints or day-to-day problems, and Team II is concerned with intermediate and long range problems, both teams are projecting immediate to long range environmental solutions in this study. Because of its broad scope, the Engineering Department representative is also supporting Team I.

C. FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

I. Most departments agree that a lot could be done in the test area. In fact, routine work has already been scheduled in the pilot area which requires use of available funds and resources. Examples of scheduled projects in the pilot area are: increased sweeping, repairs to streets, tow-away of vehicles in violation, cleaning of City property, and enforcement on private property that have had complaints on them. Aside from enforcement of existing laws related to private property, any major physical improvement to the area must be done by either 1911 Act, Federal, State, City, or private funds. Also, changes in Council or City policy would be necessary to up-grade maintenance procedures or services provided by City forces.

II. Basically, with few exceptions, the existing codes were found sufficient to correct existing deficiencies; however, code-enforcement is time-consuming, often resulting in costly and unsuccessful litigation. Also, it was found that existing City funds, labor, and equipment are greatly limited to launch a successful attack on the environmental deficiencies

in the pilot area. Therefore, if immediate action is to be taken in the pilot area, there may be a need for greater initial community support to supplement needed manpower, materials, and equipment.

Desirably, the community representative organizations will provide the needed impetus to launch a successful program. Significant support may be expected from the Urban League's Block Groups and the Model Cities program. Hopefully, if the pilot project proves successful, subsequent projects can be written into future Model Cities and City of San Diego budgets for additional support.

III. As the Task Force recommendations are approved, the Public Relations and Citizens Assistance Departments will assist the Task Force in developing a public relations program which will desirably stir immediate and long lasting support of community environmental projects. The Task Force presently has substantial slides and maps of the pilot area which may be useful for group presentations.

IV. Probably the biggest question underlying the recommendations in this report is the "modus operandi". Should strict code enforcement be emphasized or should a program of cooperation operating through a field team or representative be emphasized? It is expected that the latter would be the logical means of coordinating community environmental programs, since a heavy enforcement program would probably have a serious negative effect on area residents.

By having a field team or representative, a combined environmental program could be implemented by preventive enforcement. In this manner, environmental deficiencies can be corrected through direct personal intermediary efforts by the field representative(s) between property

owners and enforcement departments, such as Fire, Police, Building Inspection, and Zoning. This type of coordination has proven highly successful in the Irish Channel District of New Orleans, where a building inspector operates an office in the project area, provides personal assistance to property owners, depends primarily on cooperation; however, uses strict enforcement when residents refuse to comply.

Hopefully, a preventive enforcement approach to detecting problems at early stages and correcting evident violations will not only create community interest and cooperation, but will also save time and money spent on investigations, enforcement, and litigation. In this line, a cost benefit analysis may be of value to determine possible diversion of funds to support the preventive enforcement concept.

V. Zoning conflicts and unpaved streets are the two major contributors to the present physical conditions of the area.

VI. Encroachments and illegal land fills also contribute to the substandard conditions of the prototype area.

VII. Loose animals such as dogs are major contributors to spreading of litter.

VIII. Several Model Cities projects will affect the physical environment. These include Streets and Alleys, Community Housing Improvement and Revitalization Program (CHIRP), Community Redevelopment Feasibility Study, and Demonstration Blocks. (See Enclosure II)

IX. It is possible that additional programs may be developed during the remaining five years of the Model Cities program, which will affect

the physical environment. Desirably, a combined program which incorporates the recommendations of the Physical Task Force will be incorporated into the Model Cities program by the Citizens Policy Committee (CPC).

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

For simplicity, the Task Force has categorized its recommendations into immediate, intermediate, and long range programs. Each phase or category should be considered as transitory, which means, as the initial project of a particular program is completed, intermediate projects such as budget preparation, community organization, and code revisions should be implemented, then long range programs, such as capital and manpower expenditures, rezoning, and program monitoring can be started. The importance of on-going programs is to create a momentum of citizen interest in improving and maintaining their community.

I. Immediate Recommendations Include:

1) An immediate clean-up program of private property in the area on a block-by-block basis, utilizing existing City resources with community support. A small local crew of six to ten men would be sufficient to support a City crew with one loader (truck). In view of the present budget, this initial clean-up program would be difficult to sustain without budgetary considerations to provide for additional manpower, vehicles, and materials.

2) Initiate a preventive enforcement program by assigning a generalist field representative(s) who would coordinate directly with property

owners and City departments. This individual(s) would use available tools and resources to assist the property owner in correcting environmental deficiencies. Preferably, the field representative(s) would be a resident of the impact area.

If this concept is not acceptable, then it is recommended that a minor step-up enforcement program be initiated, with existing inspectors coordinating and reporting observed violations. If the environmental program is to expand, then additional investigative staff should be budgeted.

3) Institute a major public relations program to support the environmental program. A stockpile of materials to support a clean-up, paint-up, fix-up program should be requested from the private sector.

4) Coordinate with and supplement the Model Cities programs, such as Streets and Alleys and Demonstration Blocks. Encroachments and illegal land fills should be coordinated with street improvements.

5) Provide block organization assistance through the Urban League to assist in overall coordination, lot clean-ups, and minor property repairs.

II. Intermediate Recommendations Include:

1) Review buildings and structures built without permits, and initiate administrative and attorney review of codes and present levels of enforcement with the goal of up-dating codes and enforcement practices.

2) Try "Plastic Bag Only" for trash collection in test area -- explore funding of this by bag manufacturers or Federal Grant.

3) Obtain strong community support for a higher level of zoning enforcement. A real campaign could be made out of this issue, the problems of the chronic violator, the reluctance of the attorneys to prosecute, and the general citizen apathy when it comes to enforcement could be overcome.

4) Amend zoning regulations within zones which prove to be a detriment to the community. These include the C, M-1, and M-2 zones, which should be amended to require the screening of all outdoor storage as follows:

(a) That such business shall be carried on, maintained or conducted inside an enclosed building or buildings. Any outdoor storage on the premises shall be entirely enclosed by a solid fence or wall at least six (6) feet in height and constructed according to the requirement of the Building Code of San Diego.

(b) That such fence or wall be maintained in a neat, substantial, safe condition and shall be painted.

(c) That no material shall be piled, or permitted to be piled, in excess of the height of enclosing fence or wall or nearer than two feet thereto.

(d) That the premises shall be so arranged that reasonable inspection or access to all parts of the premises can be made at any time by the proper fire, health, police, and building authorities.

(e) Any of the uses to which the provisions are applicable, lawfully existing at the effective date of this amendment, shall

be completely removed from such zone within two years unless the use has been made to conform to the limitations applicable to such use. No extension so granted shall exceed one year in duration nor shall more than one such extension be granted with respect to any individual use.

5) Prepare a budget to reflect needs for a continuing environmental program.

III. Long Range Recommendations Include:

1) The continued enforcement of the laws included in immediate and intermediate plans of the departments, along with continued maintenance.

2) Study jurisdictions which have weed, litter, and junk abatement ordinances and their methods of enforcement with the goal of adopting a workable program for the City of San Diego.

3) A surveillance program be initiated to assure that the initial improvement efforts be preserved.

4) A rezoning program in conformance with the Southeast San Diego Community Plan be initiated as a long range approach to alleviating environmental problems. This task would be undertaken by the Southeast San Diego Development Committee in cooperation with Model Cities and property owners within the community.

5) Development and adoption of a comprehensive environmental project by the CPC, which may be used as a testing model to be used in other areas of the City.

E. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Environmental Task Force has developed recommendations which involve immediate to long range actions. If the program is to be successful and long lasting, there must be innovative ideas which will attract the interest and support of the community. Therefore, we feel that every effort should be made to initiate action for a personalized, comprehensive program, which will have a long lasting and continued effect on the communities in which the action program is implemented.

ANALYSIS OF THE PILOT AREA

The following section of this report attempts to describe the physical characteristics of the project area. Information included is meant to assist the reader in determining what types of projects should be undertaken and the relative success that might be expected of such projects.

1. Land Use and Zoning

The Environmental Task Force has selected a project area located south of Imperial Avenue to Interstate 5, and between 32nd Street and Wabash Boulevard. This area contains approximately 100 acres of land. Four types of zoning exist within the pilot area -- R-4, C, M-1, and M-2. Each of these zones are prevalent throughout the Southeast community. None of these zones were developed in modern times according to modern planning theories or current building and development practices. Various information can be identified in the following charts.

Number of Structures by Zone

Types of Structures	R-4	C	M-1	M-2	Total
Single Family	242	22	1	1	266
2-Family	50	7	1		58
3-Family	17	2			19
4-Family	4	2			6
5+Family	7	2			9
	320	35	2	1	358

List of Non-Residential uses located in C zone.

Type of Use:

1. Church
2. Auto-Seat Covering
3. Beauty Shop
4. Plumbing & Fixture Repair
5. Realty Office
6. Liquor Store
7. Church

List of Non-Residential uses in M-1 and M-2 zones.

Zone	Type of Use
M-1	1. Coast Refinishing Service
"	2. C-C Screen Co.
"	3. Diamond Jack Enterprise Whole Food Prod.
"	4. Kirts Refrigeration
"	5. R-P-M Service Garage
"	6. California Carpet Co.
"	7. Magee Bealla Inc.
"	8. S.D. Performance Associates Auto Repair
"	10. Steward Infra Red Sandwich
"	11. Wabash U-Rent
"	12. Brake & Wheel Auto Repair
"	13. A-1 Paper Co.
"	14. Christopher C.W. Roofing Maintenance
M-2	15. Church

Vacant and developed land by acres and zone.

	R-4	C	M-1	M-2	Total
Vacant	9	5	1	2	17
Used	72	6	4	1	83
Total Acres	81	11	5	3	100

2. Land Use and Zoning Summary

The housing pattern within the "Pilot Area: is closely correlated to the social-economic pattern evident throughout the western portion of Southeast San Diego. This area has the lowest incomes, a low level of education, a high mobility rate, a high percentage of unskilled labor and high unemployment rate. These factors serve to limit many persons' ability to afford or maintain decent housing and complicate programs of modernization or physical improvement.

Zoning regulations within the "Pilot Area" are largely those established by the first San Diego City Zoning Ordinance in 1931. All residential land within the pilot area is zoned R-4 which allows the highest density development (75-108 units per acre). Little of this land is actually used for multiple family purposes; but rather it has been developed primarily with single family or two-family units. Approximately 82 percent of the residential parcels are developed with single family and two-family units. Actually, the R-4 zone is developed in a density of five units per net residential acre, a very low residential density.

There are 11 acres of land in the "Pilot Area" zones for commercial development, yet only 1.3 acres are being used for such purpose. 4.7 acres are being used for residential usage with the remaining five acres being vacant. Commercial zoning is used for a mixture of residential and commercial usage with residential density being within the (0-5) unit per acre category (35 dwellings on a total of

11 acres). Along with this a total of seven non-residential uses are developed.

An investigation was also made of the economic vitality of existing businesses utilizing sales figures for the period 1960-1966 and for the first quarter of 1967. In general, retail sales show declines in various portions of the community ranging from 54 percent to 19 percent. This loss in sales is attributed to out-dated commercial development pattern, poor merchandising techniques, competition from outside commercial facilities, and low level of disposable income. Continued declines in sales could result in further economic and physical deterioration.

Of considerable importance to the community is the quality and quantity of the industrial activity that exists in the area. It can be a source of economic vitality through production and employment as well as a source of conflict and irritation to adjacent land use. At present there are fourteen industrial establishments in the "Pilot Area". Within the study area there are only three family dwellings located on industrial land. Three acres of vacant industrial land exist.

3. Ownership

Every privately owned parcel was designated on a base map according to the classification of ownership; (1) whether the property owner lived on the block the property is located, (2) whether they lived in the Model Cities Neighborhood, but outside the block, (3) lived in the Southeast Planning Area but outside the Model Neighborhood; (4) lived in the City but outside of Southeast; (5) or lived outside of the City. The following table illustrates the various ownership patterns by use in respect to the classification mentioned above.

Ownership by Use

Owner Category

Use		Percent	2	Percent	3	Percent	4	Percent	5	Percent	Total	Percent
Single Family	161	67	25	10	10	4	25	10	18	8	239	
2-Family	31	70	4	9	3	7	2	5	4	9	44	
Apts.	11	37	5	17	1	3	7	23	6	20	30	
Non-Res.	5	22	2	9	1	4	5	22	10	43	23	
Vac.	24	52	1	2	2	4	13	28	6	13	46	
Total	232	61%	37	10%	17	4%	52	14%	44	11%	382	100%

4. Ownership Summary

The study area has been broken into four (4) categories; which area the property owner lives in, type of residential unit owned, non-residential, and vacant land. From the information provided, a high percentage of owners live within the Southeast Community Planning Area. Figures indicate a total of 286/75% of 382 do live within the boundaries of the Southeast Planning Area. With such a high percentage of community owners, which can identify with the existing environmental problems, maximum support would be expected.

A different pattern however exists for non-residential and apartment uses. Sixty-five percent of non-residential use is owned by people outside the Southeast area with 43% of the apartments in this category. A community-oriented approach to alleviate environmental problems on these properties cannot be utilized to any great amount of success.

5. Unimproved Streets and Alleys

Below is a list of the unimproved streets and alleys in the prototype area. Under the present policy the unimproved streets and alleys in area can only be improved by private contract or 1911 Act.

Public works will continue maintaining the streets and alleys they have in the past.

Items marked by * have been tentatively accepted for Model Cities 2/3 improvement grant.

Alley, south of Ocean View, east of 32nd

Alley between 32nd and Bancroft - Ocean View and Franklin

Alley between 32nd and Bancroft - Franklin and Clay

Alley between 32nd and Bancroft - Clay and Webster

Alley between 32nd and Bancroft - north of Webster

Alley between 32nd and 33rd - Logan and National

Alley between 32nd and 33rd - National and Newton

*Street - Webster, east of 33rd to Wabash Channel

*Street - Logan, 32nd to 33rd

*Street - Greely, 33rd to Payne

*Street - Payne, Greely to south end

*Street - Martin, 32nd to Gregory

*Street - Bancroft, Ocean View to south dead end

Street - Broad, 33rd to Wabash Channel

6. Short Term Street Maintenance

The following items are considered to be short range maintenance problems.

Those marked by * have either been repaired by City Forces or are in progress. The remaining ones will be scheduled as soon as time and availability of forces permit.

*411 South 32nd - AC digout - scheduled by City Forces

*3202 National - tree and walk problem - scheduled by City Forces

*3279 National - sidewalk repair - scheduled by City Forces

*1031 South 32nd - alley return repair - scheduled by City Forces

32nd - east side, south of Commercial - needs curb and sidewalk

East of 32nd, south of Martin - drain extension needed - now under construction

32nd at Logan - needs cross gutter - Logan east of 32nd should be improved first to carry the drainage

*Ocean View - south side, west of Bancroft - sidewalk repair scheduled by City Forces

*Ocean View - south side, east of 32nd - sign - scheduled by City Forces

32nd Street, east side, south of Imperial - sidewalk and curb needs raising

MODEL CITIES RECOMMENDATIONS

The San Diego Model Cities Program is currently in its first action year. There are a number of programs that will affect the physical environment. These include Streets and Alleys, Community Housing Improvement and Revitalization Program, Community Redevelopment Feasibility Study and Demonstration Blocks.

1. Streets and Alleys

The objective of this program is to enhance and improve the quality of the physical environment by providing special financial assistance to bring about major improvements. Under current City procedure for improving streets and alleys, an assessment district is formed under a 1911 Act in which the benefitting property owner assumes the cost. The establishment of an assessment district requires the approval of 60 percent of the affected property owners.

The first year funds of the program will be used to improve those streets that are most heavily travelled and that serve that portion of the community that could not otherwise afford to undertake improvements under existing provisions. It is possible that some of the streets to be improved may fall within the boundaries of the Southeast Environmental Task Force. The program is presently being recycled back through the Physical Task Force of Model Cities for additional citizen input. Preliminary indications are that the residents of Area 3 of the Model Neighborhood desire to have some streets within the Environmental Task Force pilot area improved.

2. CHIRP

The basic objective of the program (Community Housing Improvement and Revitalization Program) is to rehabilitate neighborhoods in the process of deterioration.

The program is to be done with minimum demolition and dislocation. Four areas are scheduled to be selected for CHIRP and it is the intention of the program to benefit 2000 housing units.

The first area that has been tentatively selected for CHIRP is the area around Balboa Elementary School. There is no way of telling at this time which areas will be selected for the three remaining programs. If the Environmental Task Force area was included in a future CHIRP program, in whole or in part, there would be a substantial visual impact on the area. The potential of CHIRP is probably greater than any other current program that could be applied to the Environmental Task Force pilot area.

3. Community Redevelopment Feasibility Study

This study will be threefold in scope. First, it will attempt to do a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the physical and environmental needs of the Model Neighborhood. Secondly, the community will be solicited as to the most effective programs to improve the area. Thirdly, an assessment of City Ordinance 9708, which restricts the use of Federal funds to public redevelopment, and possible alternatives to Ordinance 9708 will be supplied.

Since this program is basically a study to define needs, there will be no tangible effects that will be visible in the short run. However, the long run impact of the study should materially affect the entire community.

4. Demonstration Block Program

The purpose of this program is to show how small neighborhood areas may be revitalized without disruption of the community. By coordinating the improvement of housing structures with the creation of new open spaces and the improvement of

the environment, the overall condition of the neighborhood will be improved. Several locations for this program will be selected throughout the Model Neighborhood. Exact locations have not been decided upon.

5. Summary

These are the current programs that could have some effect on the area selected by the Southeast Environmental Task Force. Future programs have not been devised. The possibility for imaginative solutions to environmental problems exists at this time. It is a matter of the citizens and Model Cities staff working together to decide how to go about solving the problem. Following this, a request for funds will be made to the Department of Housing and Urban Development.