

Torrance Ticketing Revenue Scheme: Hollywood Riviera Will be Most Severely Impacted of All Zones

It is time for every Torrance resident impacted by the City of Torrance's disingenuous street sweeping/ticketing scheme to oppose this plan with great urgency, particularly in the Hollywood Riviera.

Watchdog groups have already proven the following:

- That the City falsified the data it used to initiate this plan
- That the City openly lied concerning regulations required to implement this plan and grossly exaggerated the repercussions and effectiveness of the plan
- That the City lied to its citizens when it said this was not a revenue generating scheme (see *Daily Breeze* article)

<http://www.dailybreeze.com/government-and-politics/20160730/torrance-street-sweeping-program-generates-windfall-from-traffic-tickets>

These are not opinions, but facts backed by solid research that has been presented to the City Council.

Homeowners in the Hollywood Riviera will be impacted most severely by the City's self-imposed visual blight, for a very simple reason – the area has the largest number of curved roads in Torrance.

Why does this matter? – because ticketing requires line-of-sight – with no exceptions. When confronted in other areas with concerns about excess signage, the City falsely said that they would consider spacing the signs up to “300-500 feet,” a ridiculous distance that falls far outside of Police regulations. They will almost certainly use the same disingenuous argument on Riviera residents that “they will work carefully to minimize the impact of signage.” History shows that they will say whatever they need to promote this discredited program. Here is what reality looks like.

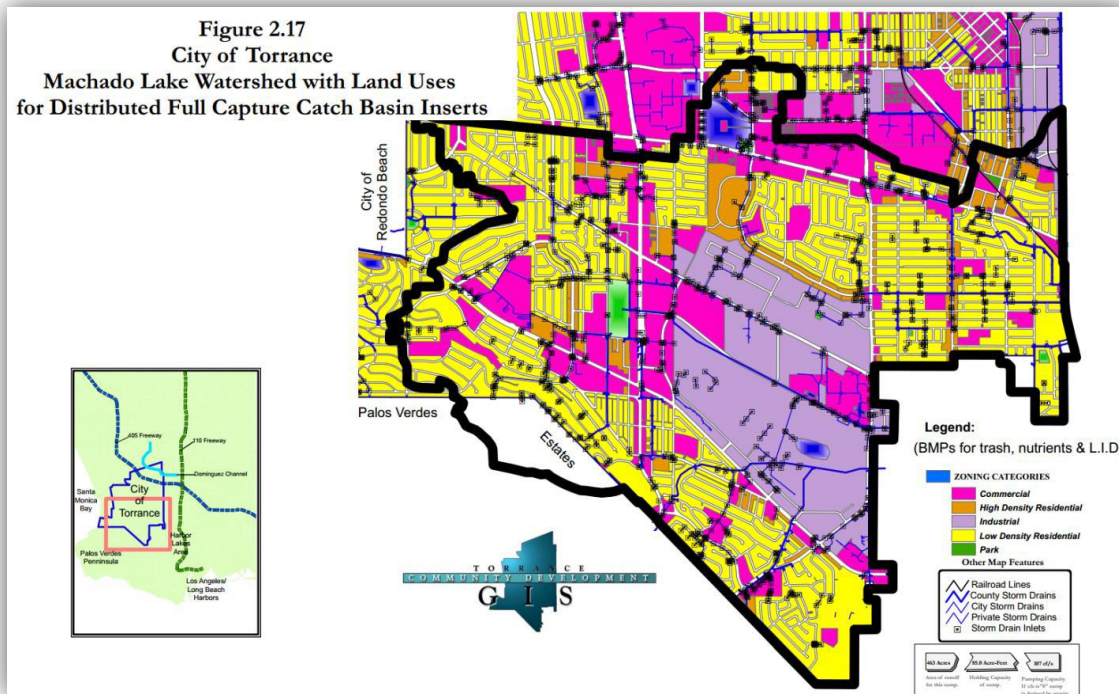


In at least one zone, a resident counted 23 signs in less than a ½ mile of road, so the Riviera will undoubtedly be targeted with the highest densities in the city. Sign pollution changes the look of a street and can mar the look of your property, so those of you 150 feet or less from a curve should be particularly alarmed, because the city will plant a sign in your lawn.

Exaggerated Claims – The City continues to push this program as mandated (despite never producing any proof of that claim), with dire predictions of fines and grossly exaggerated predictions of significant environmental success. The most recent scientific study on this subject (and the only one known to include parking frequency) was conducted in the Seaside Ranchos area. That study **showed that ticketing would result in almost zero reduction in waterborne pollution in low-density areas.** However, it will generate a 100% production of visual blight and stress in our neighborhoods.

Be prepared to see the City provide outlandish tonnage numbers, which in truth will have nothing to do with the so called “optimized plan,” but are the same kinds of numbers being reported in every part of California due to excessive summer leaf drop from the drought. Also remember, the grates make the City 100% compliant with the Machado Lake requirements.

Their second argument will be that they need to keep the new grates debris free, another false argument. Go take a good look at the grates in no-parking and ticketed areas to see the same thing we see – ticketing has no effect on the debris that collects on these grates. The City makes no effort to keep them free of refuse. During a rain event, heightened leaf debris is inevitable, with ticketing/signage having zero effect on storm drain clogging.



What is True – Best Practices

Those of us who have researched this topic have verified what we already suspected – street sweeping is routinely used as a revenue-generating scheme by cash strapped cities such as Torrance. What makes this case so egregious is the City’s clear attempt to mislead its citizens and City Council. The truth is – there is no necessity for the “optimized” program. The City made

it up. The current street sweeping plan far exceeds minimum requirements and no change is required.

Ticketing and enforcement may be necessary in high-density areas (apartments and busy streets) with high levels of traffic, litter, and limited movement of cars from a lack of parking. But the best practices in low density areas require sweeping only once a month to once a year. All of the areas previously targeted and projected in the so called “optimized plan” are in the “B” and “C” category and already exceed current best practices. No matter what the city claims, the “optimized” program is completely unnecessary based on established best practices.

ii. Each Permittee shall perform street sweeping of curbed streets according to the following schedule:

Priority A: Streets and/or street segments that are designated as Priority A shall be swept at least two times per month.

Priority B: Streets and/or street segments that are designated as Priority B shall be swept at least once per month.

Priority C: Streets and/or street segments that are designated as Priority C shall be swept as necessary but in no case less than once per year.

The Alternative

All of us want to prevent pollution and have our streets swept efficiently, but we were never given the chance for a heightened voluntary effort before the city went straight to ticketing. We now know the reason – this program has nothing to do with the environment, but everything to do with filling city coffers. Read Nick Green’s article on public pay in Torrance and you will understand -- “For all 60 L.A. County cities (surveyed), Torrance employees make up nine of the top 10 people with highest total compensation as percentage of salary.”

<http://www.dailybreeze.com/government-and-politics/20160621/how-compensation-for-public-employees-in-3-south-bay-cities-balloons-with-perks>

We offered the City a revolutionary alternative with no signs, no ticketing, but the best public education program ever conducted in this category by using a media (phone, text, email) reminder system. They rejected this after a quick review, saying “it will fail, because it has never been tried.”

Conclusion

We urge every citizen to not only oppose this phony “optimized plan,” but also to request the City Council to open an investigation into those officials who have engaged in unethical and dishonest behavior in implementing this stealth street-sweeping tax. A city that is willing to deface itself with more than 20,000 signs and grossly inconvenience its own citizens, just to maintain its bloated salaries and pension structure, is reprehensible. Please contact your representative today to demand an immediate investigation and rejection of this unnecessary program.

**pfurey@torranceca.gov, hashcraft@torranceca.gov, tgoodrich@torranceca.gov,
mgriffiths@torranceca.gov, grizzo@torranceca.gov, kweideman@torranceca.gov,
mherring@torranceca.gov**

Prepared by Torrance Citizens Against Government Waste (08/21/2016)