



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0266, Version: 1

Recommendation to receive and file a report on the results of a survey to determine the level of support from property owners for a vector control funding measure in areas of the City not currently covered by a benefit assessment, and

Authorize City Manager, or designee to direct the City's consultant, SCI Consulting Group, to proceed with the preliminary development of the engineer's report and ballot preparation to establish a benefit assessment district at the rate of \$8.21 per Single Family Residence per year and return to City Council for final review and approval in May 2019. (Citywide)

On October 2, 2018, the City Council approved a contract with SCI Consulting Group (SCI) to research the feasibility of establishing a benefit assessment district to fund mosquito and vector control in areas of the City not currently covered by a benefit assessment. Similar to establishment of a Business Improvement District, the process to establish a benefit assessment is subject to Proposition 218 (Prop. 218), which involves multiple steps, including surveys, data analysis, an engineer's report, mailed ballots, City Council direction, and a public hearing. If approved, the assessment is included on the property owner's annual tax bill. Thus, an important timing consideration is the Los Angeles County Auditor's (LACo Auditor) requirement to have any new levies submitted by August 9, 2019. Meeting the LACo Auditor's requirement is a key driver in establishing project milestones, as identified below:

January 17	
February 22	
March 19	Survey results presented to C
March 7	April
May 7	City Council meeting with req
May 17	
July 2	City Council meeting/public h
July 3 - 22	
July 23	City Council meeting to annou
August 9	

As part of the process, SCI conducted a survey to determine the priorities and level of property owner support for a vector assessment in unassessed areas of the City. To that end,

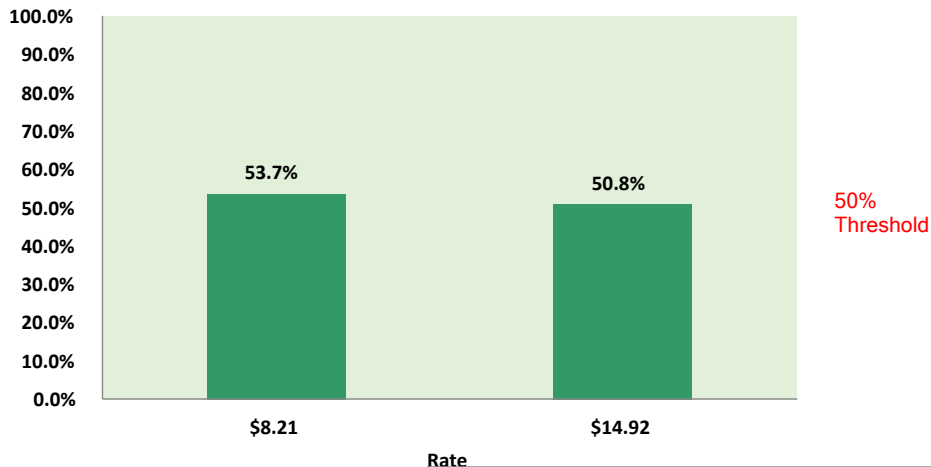
a survey was mailed out to the property owners of approximately 20,000 parcels (out of 79,000) in the unassessed areas of the City. The survey was mailed out on January 18, 2019 and provided information to property owners on the vector control program and assessed their relative support for new or enhanced programs to control mosquitoes and other vectors in Long Beach.

Two key scenarios were explored in the survey. The first scenario measured support for vector services at an annual assessment of \$8.21. This level of service would provide year-round control of invasive mosquitoes and other pests using environmentally sound methods. Monitoring for public health issues, such as West Nile virus, Zika, Typhus, and other emerging vector borne diseases would also be conducted. The second scenario measured support for creating an enhanced vector control program at an annual assessment of \$14.92. The enhanced program would improve vector monitoring and improve response times to public health issues, such as West Nile virus, Zika, Typhus, and other emerging diseases. The enhanced program would also continue year-round control of invasive mosquitoes and other pests. In addition, the enhanced program would provide increased education and awareness to residents about protecting themselves from diseases carried by mosquitoes and other vectors. Services would be expanded to include addressing rodents, bats, rabies surveillance and investigations, and would provide additional monitoring for other public health threats such as emerging mosquito species.

As noted, two rates were tested for this project in the amounts of \$8.21 and \$14.92. The chart below shows the overall level of projected weighted support for each rate tested. The weighting of assessment ballots is the equivalent of one vote per dollar of proposed assessment. As an example, if the proposed assessment is \$10 per home, an owner of two single family homes could cast a ballot that is worth \$20 in weighted votes ($\10×2), and the owner of one single family home could cast a ballot that is worth half as much, or \$10 in weighted votes.

The chart below shows that the overall level of support for the \$8.21 is 53.7 percent, and the overall level of support for the \$14.92 rate is 50.8 percent. Although both rates are supported above the required Prop. 218 majority protest ballot threshold of 50 percent plus 1, the second rate would not be viable when considering the margin of error of 1.75 percent.

Overall Support by Proposed Rate



The overall community priorities garnering a favorable response were:

1. Control the emergence of invasive species, such as *Aedes aegypti* (Yellow Fever Mosquito), that can carry life-threatening diseases.
2. Prevent future outbreaks of Zika, Dengue, West Nile virus, and other diseases.
3. Reduce mosquito populations using environmentally-sound methods.
4. None of the proceeds from this assessment could be taken by the State or County and can only be used directly for mosquito and vector control services.
5. Continue the use of mosquito traps to measure mosquito populations, and expand focused, surveillance-based control programs.
6. Control and treat “green pools,” which are a major source of mosquitoes.
7. Improve response times to control mosquito populations using environmentally-sound treatments to address Zika, Dengue, West Nile virus, and other life-threatening diseases.

These project priorities provide important insight to the community. The top priorities relate to reducing mosquito populations, invasive species and the diseases they carry, followed by the use of environmentally-sound methods. Fiscal responsibility is also a great concern in the community; survey respondents indicated that they want assurances that the funding will be used solely by the Vector Control Program for mosquito and vector control services. The results for all the projects, issues and arguments are summarized in the attached report.

The City’s consultant, SCI, recommends the City conduct a mailed ballot majority protest proceeding to establish dedicated funding to continue comprehensive mosquito and vector control services at the rate of \$8.21 per Single Family Residence per year.

SCI also recommends that the City include an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment mechanism, not to exceed 3 percent per year, and requiring annual City Council approval, and that the assessment continues each year unless ended by voters or the City Council.

An informational outreach program is needed to ensure City residents are fully informed about the proposed mosquito and vector control services, and the costs and budgets included with this ballot proceeding.

Upon presentation and review of the survey results, should the City Council decide to continue formation of the mosquito and vector control benefit assessment district, the Health and Human Services Department will return to the City Council in May for adoption of a Resolution of Intention to move forward with a mailed ballot majority protest election seeking approval of the benefit assessment from the impacted parcel owners.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Amy R. Webber on February 26, 2019 and by Budget Analysis Officer Julissa Jose-Murray on March 1, 2019.

City Council action is requested on March 19, 2019, to ensure the benefit assessment milestones are achieved in compliance with LACo Auditor submission requirements.

There is no fiscal or local job impact associated with this recommendation. Compiling this report requires minimal level of staff hours beyond normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. Should a benefit assessment district be established, at the rate of \$8.21 per Single Family Residence per year, it is projected it will raise \$697,607 annually to fund mosquito and vector control in areas of the City not currently covered by a benefit assessment.

Approve recommendation.

KELLY COLOPY
DIRECTOR
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER