



CITY OF SACRAMENTO

(2)

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

1231 "I" Street

Sacramento, Ca. 95814

Administration
Room 300 449-5571
Building Inspections
Room 200 449-5716
Nuisance Abatement
Room 301 449-5948
Planning
Room 200 449-5604

January 24, 1987

Transportation and Community
Development Committee

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: 1986 Weed Abatement Program

SUMMARY

This report includes information on the 1986 Weed Abatement Program and is submitted for information only and requires no action.

BACKGROUND

City fire protection needs for vacant lots reached a high in 1971 when some 3,169 grass fires were reported. The concern of the potential for major fire damage to residential areas from those vacant lots prompted the creation of a Weed Abatement Program. The basic objective of the Weed Abatement Program was to seek removal of weeds from all vacant lots. Over the years, it was found that a majority of owners, when notified of the weed problems, took care of their own abatement. However, there remained a certain number of owners who disregarded the City's notices or elected to have the City do the work. In these cases, the City secured private contractors, had the work done, and billed the property owners. The responsibility for operation of this program originally administered by the Fire Department was transferred to the Finance Department Revenue Division in 1985 and then to Planning and Development Department Nuisance Abatement Division in January of 1986.

Approximately 12,500 notices are mailed annually to owners of vacant lots. These notices usually mailed in January advise the owners to make arrangements to eliminate the weed and grass fire hazards that exist on their properties. These owners are advised that if they do not complete their own work by discing or mowing, then a City Contractor will do the work. The owners are also informed that in addition to the actual contractor charges, they will be assessed an administrative fee for this service.

Over 10,000 lot owners abate their own weeds, however, the City must solicit and secure private contractors for abatement work on approximately 2,500 lots each year.

1986 WEED ABATEMENT PROGRAM

The late transfer (January 1986) of the administration of this operation to the Nuisance Abatement Division limited the number of program modifications for 1986. However, several notable changes were made. One included restructuring the bid process to eliminate soliciting contractor bids for each individual lot. The 1986 bid requests specified groups of lots ranging from 25 to 100 lots. The contractors were thus able to bid on groups of lots and in geographical areas of their preference. This step reduced repetitious administration time in preparation of bids. Another time and cost saving step implemented included utilization of contracts that may be renewed annually up to a maximum of three years, thus eliminating the need to solicate new bids each year.

On October 9, 1985, the City Council approved the augmentation plan which created the Nuisance Abatement Division. That approval also included a number of specified recommendations relative to the Weed Abatement Program. One recommendation required Weed Abatement Contractors to clean up debris and to trim weeds adjacent to sidewalks and fence lines. Another was to utilize the Sacramento Local Conservation Corp for weed abatement work and for help in removal of weeds and debris from unimproved alleys. The weed abatement budget was increased from the 1985-86 amount of \$95,000 to \$250,000 for the 1986-87 budget year to accomodate the additional work.

Before proceeding with the actual weed abatement work, certain administrative tasks had to be completed. These tasks included preparation of a new contract document for execution between the City and Weed Abatement Contractors; soliciting contractor bids; conducting a public hearing before the City Council declaring the identified vacant lots as a public nuisance; and inspect approximately 2,500 parcels prior to ordering contractor work.

Once these tasks were completed, emphasis was then placed on discing and/or mowing as many lots as possible before the 4th of July, which has been annually selected as the target date for optimum fire prevention.

Highlights of the 1986 Weed Abatement Program*

- o Over 2,300 lots were abated by City Contractors totalling approximately 665 acres.
- o 1,133 grass fires were reported in 1986. (less than the all time low of 1,185 that was reported in 1983)
- o The Local Sacramento Conservation Corp worked on 188 projects. (121 alleys and 67 lots)

* (see Exhibit A for more detailed information)

RECOMMENDATION

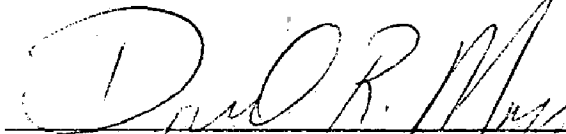
This report is submitted for information only and requires no action.

Respectfully Submitted,



Michael Hanamura
Nuisance Abatement Manager

Recommend Approval:



David R. Martinez
Deputy City Manager



CITY OF SACRAMENTO

EXHIBIT A

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

1231 "I" Street

Sacramento, Ca. 95814

December 31, 1986

Administration
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert B. Wall, Acting Director
FROM: Michael Hanamura, Nuisance Abatement Manager
Subject: STATUS OF WEED ABATEMENT ACTIVITIES ON VACANT LOTS

I. Progress Report of Weed Abatement activities to date:

Number of Abatement Notices mailed	12,273
Number of lots abated by City contractors	2,337
Total area abated by City contractors	665 acres
Number of contractors under contract (including local Conservation Corps)	6
Contractors' start-up date	May 2, 1986
Work completed by local Conservation Corps (Alleys - 121; Lots - 67)	188
Additional complaints investigated (Residential/Commercial)(Vacant & Occupied)	274
TOTAL NUMBER OF INSPECTIONS	20,050

II. Impact of Weed Abatement work on grass fires

Number of grass fires 1986	1,133
Number of grass fires in 1985 TOTAL	1,428
All time LOW number of grass fires (1983)	1,185
All time HIGH number of grass fires (1971)	3,169*

*There was no official Weed Abatement Program in 1971.