



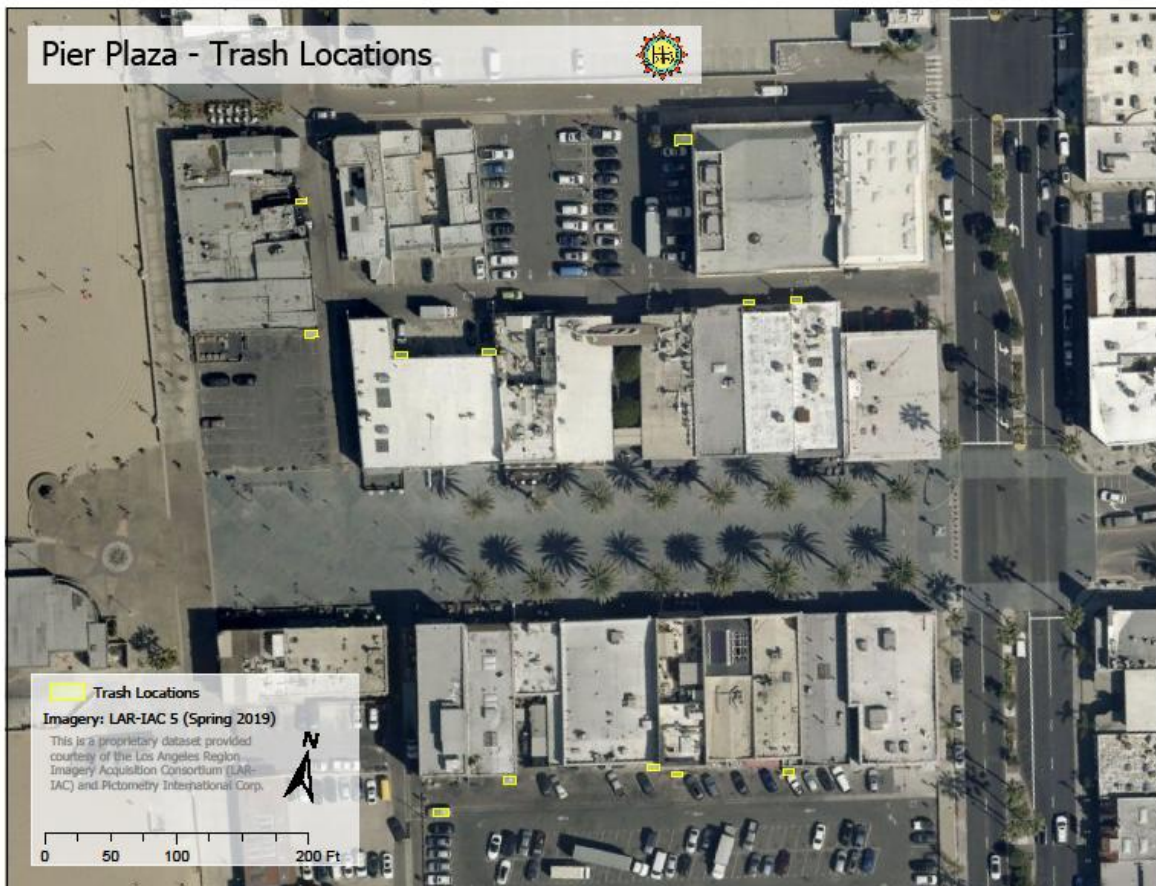
City of Hermosa Beach

Information Item

DATE: April 24, 2020
TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: Doug Krauss, Environmental Programs Manager
SUBJECT: Pier Plaza Trash Service Update

Executive Summary:

At its January 28, 2020 meeting, City Council unanimously approved an item authorizing the removal of the trash compactor in Parking Lot A that served Pier Plaza businesses. In addition to the removal of the compactor, the item recommended installation of multiple trash enclosures in Parking Lots A and B to allow for more individualized service for these businesses. The map below was included as an attachment to the staff report, and shows the proposed sites of the distributed trash container locations, including five enclosures proposed for Parking Lot A and one enclosure for Parking Lot B.



This information item serves to provide an update on the removal of the compactor, installation of the new enclosures and other matters related to the implementation of the new trash service for Pier Plaza.



City of Hermosa Beach

Information Item

Background:

The trash compactor in Parking Lot A had been a source of blight for many years and had been addressed by City Council on multiple occasions to seek improvements. The compactor served all Pier Plaza businesses and staff of the businesses were not properly disposing of trash in the compactor nor were they properly locking the enclosure. This led to the compactor area becoming overrun with trash and illegal dumped items, and created substantial odors and polluted run-off during rain events.

City staff and franchised waste hauler, Athens Services, worked with the businesses in various ways over the years to improve conditions. This included site visits to educate and train business staff, notices sent by the Code Enforcement, and even the City Council's approval of additional funding to increase trash porter service for the businesses. Despite these repeated efforts, no significant improvement was realized. One of the central causes of the problems was a lack of accountability. Because compactor service was shared by all Pier Plaza businesses, the City was unable to identify violators with certainty and thus was unable to enforce efficiently. In response to these ongoing concerns, and informed by the continued examination by the Downtown Subcommittee, it was decided to bring a recommendation before Council to remove the compactor and implement individualized service. The recommendation included each business getting its own containers for trash and six trash enclosures to be built where space permitted, some of which would be shared by adjacent businesses. The enclosures were proposed to be installed nearer to the rear of businesses in Parking Lot A and in the northeast corner of Lot B.

In October and November of 2019, City staff visited a number of the affected businesses to discuss the proposed changes. This included a meeting with members of the Chamber of Commerce in person to discuss the matter. All affected businesses were mailed letters inviting them to a meeting held November 6, 2019 at City Hall to discuss the proposed changes. No businesses attended this meeting. Another letter was sent to all affected businesses in advance of the January 28th, 2020 Council meeting to notify customers of the final staff recommendation.

Immediately after Council's January 28th approval of the compactor's removal, staff began coordinating with Athens Services to remove the compactor and arrange installment of the new enclosures. Athens staff visited every affected business to explain the transition and new billing and rates. Previously, customers paid a portion of the overall compactor service cost, based on previous audits of waste generation at each business. These previous estimates were used to determine initial service volumes and frequencies for the new service yet could be adjusted by the customers to accommodate any changes in service needs. Additionally, this transition provided the opportunity to deliver organics recycling containers to all business required to recycle organics per California law. The prior compactor service did not allow effective organics recycling options for these businesses. During this process, Athens was also able to establish accounts for a few Pier Plaza businesses that were previously not paying for trash service.



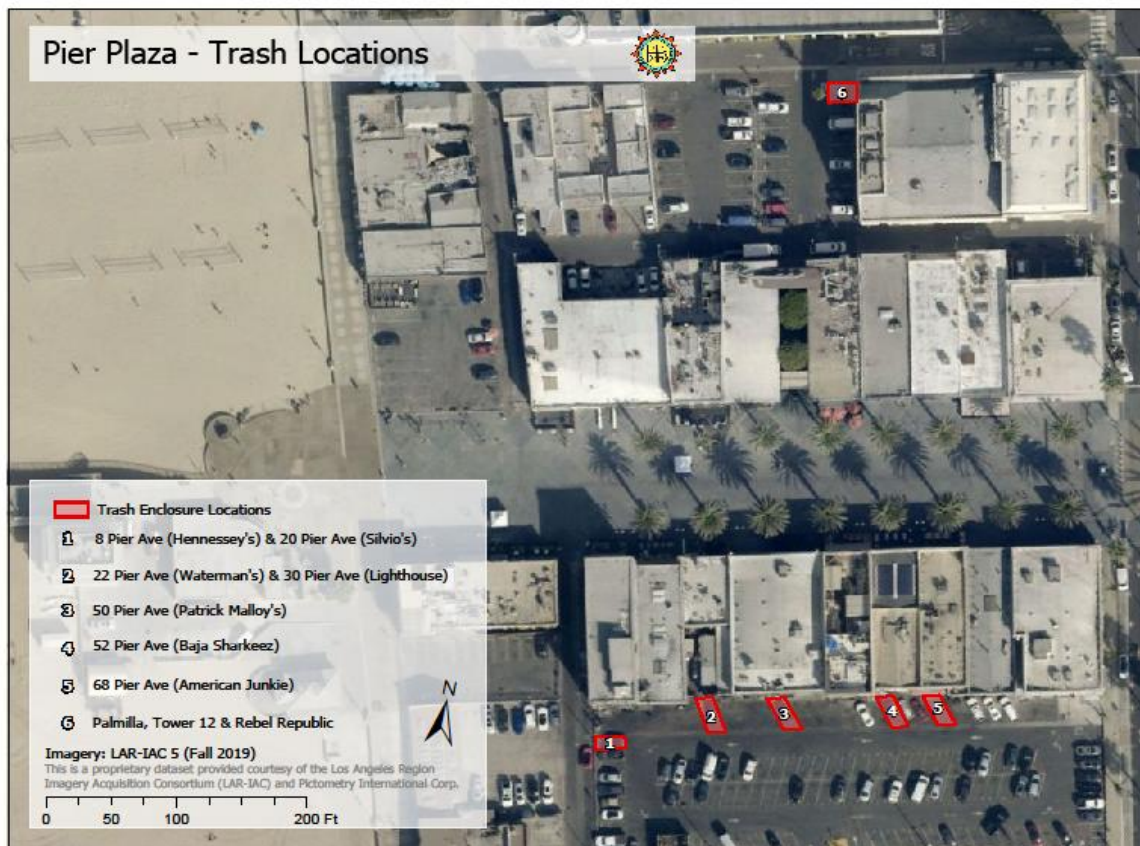
City of Hermosa Beach

Information Item

Installation of the new enclosures began the last week of February with a goal of starting the new service on March 2. Due to some logistical challenges, some enclosures were not installed until the following week. New trash containers were delivered to all other affected customers during this time. The compactor remained operational during this transition to accommodate the businesses adjusting to the new service. The final enclosure installations were completed by March 6th.

Discussion

During the installation process, representatives from some of the businesses voiced concerns over locations of the enclosures, service levels, billing and other logistical issues. One enclosure was relocated in the midst of installation (with City staff approval) to accommodate the concerns of the business over access to their backdoor. More than one business apologized to City staff for not responding to the City's previous attempts to communicate the proposed changes. Both City and Athens staff informed the customers that the situation would be monitored moving forward. It was explained that service levels were able to be adjusted as needed to accommodate each business's specific needs. Other adjustments to locations of bins and service levels were made during this time as staff and Athens Services conferred with customers. The final layout of the new enclosures is seen below:





City of Hermosa Beach

Information Item

Councilman Fangary reported at the March 10, 2020 Council Meeting that he had received feedback from some of the businesses about concerns with the enclosure locations, specifically in Parking Lot A. This included concerns that the configurations of the enclosures create partially concealed areas that could permit unsafe and unsanitary behavior by visitors, especially at night. Per Councilman Fangary's recommendation, City staff met with Police staff to discuss monitoring the locations to assess the need for any adjustments. The Downtown Subcommittee met shortly thereafter to discuss the situation and it was decided that it was best to move forward with Council's original recommendation and continue the service and trash enclosure locations as installed, in conjunction with ongoing monitoring and assessment.

Below is a photo of Parking Lot A as of April 19, 2020 showing the new enclosures. Note that the compactor and its enclosure are removed. Public Works staff are in the process of doing the final pavement rehabilitation in the former compactor area to be ready for re-stripping to re-establish parking in that area. Five new parking places will be created to accommodate the five spots used for the new trash enclosures.



There have been no significant issues of crime, trash accumulation or other problems with the new service to date. This is understandably due in part to the current slowdown of business resulting from to the COVID-19 pandemic. The situation will continue to be monitored moving forward to determine if any adjustments are necessary. Police Department, Code Enforcement, and Athens Services staff will all monitor the situation and communicate on any issues that arise. An update will be brought to Council at the appropriate time. The new trash service and enclosure locations will also serve as a study in best management practices to help inform the design of the reconstruction of Parking Lot A (CIP #695) scheduled for 2021.