Alameda County Illegal Dumping Pilot

FINAL REPORT

An exploration of scalable, replicable solutions to illegal dumping.

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1 Executive Summary

The Alameda County Illegal Dumping (ACID) Pilot launched in April of 2019 (2.4), seeking to identify, implement, and disseminate effective strategies for addressing illegal dumping that could be replicated and scaled.

The pilot developed a three-pronged strategy of Education, Eradication, and Enforcement, known as the Three E’s (2.3.2), implemented proactively and reactively in two of the worst illegal dumping hotspot in East Oakland (2.2). Additionally, an added strategic layer focused on integrating this strategy across each stage of the Roadmap to End Illegal Dumping (4.2).

Additionally, the ACID pilot engaged a broad, cross-sector coalition to clean and beautify the area. Pilot members removed over 250 tons of illegally dumped material from the streets, and planted 145 trees to prevent future dumping and provide a healthier environment that discouraged dumping.

Community members and businesses near the pilot location were surveyed before, during, and after the pilot (4.3), to understand their perceptions of illegal dumping, blight, crime, and other quality of life issues. Based on the perceptions of community members, satisfaction with the City and County’s efforts to address illegal dumping increased by 11 points during the first year of the pilot, while the share that were unsatisfied dropped 18 points, showing a significant positive shift in perceptions during the pilot period.

Based on these results, the pilot has identified 6 strategies to effectively address illegal dumping:

1. Enforce existing laws (3.1).
2. Utilize camera-based Enforcement Strategies (3.2).
3. Reduce barriers to eradication (3.3).
4. Embrace cross-sector partnerships (3.4).
5. Community organizing is key to sustainability (3.5).
6. Crime prevention through environmental design (3.6).

By sustaining this effort the ACID Pilot was able to substantively change the trajectory of these illegal dumping hotspots. The Pilot team believes that these recommendations can be adopted across a variety of municipal levels to provide relief to neighborhoods and communities impacted by illegal dumping.
2 OVERVIEW OF PILOT

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO PILOT
The Alameda County Illegal Dumping (ACID) Pilot is a multi-sector partnership designed to address illegal dumping in East Oakland through a three-pronged strategy of Education, Eradication, and Enforcement. The pilot focuses on two well-known illegal dumping hotspots: Railroad Avenue and G Street.

2.1.1 Illegal Dumping Hotspots in Oakland
Illegal dumping activity tends to concentrate in areas known as hotspots. The City of Oakland has identified over 100 illegal dumping hotspots within its boundaries, based on reported instances of dumping and public works activities.

Figure 2: The Oakland Public Works Department has identified over 100 illegal dumping hotspots throughout the City.

However, it is worth noting that the reliance on citizens to report illegal dumping activity biases the hotspot identification towards corridors and neighborhoods frequented by residents. Furthermore, the frequency and intensity/volume of dumping in these hotspots varies.

2.2 SUMMARY OF PILOT LOCATION
The ACID Pilot sought to adopt hotspots with a high frequency and volume of dumping activity, and was therefore directed towards Railroad Avenue and G Street by the City.

2.2.1 G Street
In the Elmhurst neighborhood of East Oakland, a stretch of G Street between 85th through 92nd Avenue has long been known as a hotspot for illegal dumping. The neighborhood contains a mixture of tightly
packed mix of industrial and residential zoning, with little to no buffer in between. The street has little foot traffic and has been poorly lit at night; conditions known to encourage illegal dumping activity.

Additionally, the street has attracted a large population of RV and car dwellers. Without access to traditional waste streams (i.e., regular garbage service) this has contributed to large amounts of garbage, waste, and debris littering the street, contributing to a feeling of neglect and deterioration in the neighborhood.

Business owners and residents alike share concerns about the same problems. Visual cues of deterioration attract other crimes, such as drug use, gun violence, graffiti, and gang activity — G Street is no exception. It is not uncommon for cars to be stolen, stripped for parts, and set on fire. Residential security cameras have caught footage of gun battles in broad daylight. Bodies have been found rolled up in carpets, dead animals are left on the street regularly, and attacks on local businesses are common.

One side street in particular, 89th Avenue, has attracted the greatest proportion of illegal activity. The street is flanked by 11-foot high corrugated steel walls, with abandoned and vacant buildings dotting the street. The narrowness, combined with the high metal walls, make the street particularly difficult to monitor, creating conditions ripe for illegal activity. Illegal dumping happens nearly every night on this stretch of road, and is even common during the day.

The neighborhood has gone to great length to try and deter this behavior, even going as far as to permanently close streets. Past efforts to curb illegal dumping include planting trees, placing concrete barriers and planter boxes to block illegal dumping spots, but without a consistent enforcement effort by the City, these efforts have had a minimal impact on the overall quality of the street and surrounding neighborhood.
2.2.2 Railroad Avenue

Straddling the Coliseum Industrial Zone and Brookfield Neighborhood, Railroad Avenue, between 85th and 98th Avenue, is a near mile long stretch of road that embodies some of the worst illegal dumping activity in the city. The street has several factors that contribute to its status as an illegal dumping hotspot, the biggest being its namesake – the railroad. Union Pacific tracks about the entire East side of the street. Given the lack of maintenance and beautification undertaken by Union Pacific, the effect is the same as an abandoned or vacant building, with an absentee landlord, but for the entire length of the street.

The Northern half the corridor, coming off of 85th Avenue, is largely industrial, with large warehouses, concrete recyclers, and truck yards. Many of the street lights are not functional, creating a dark stretch of road with little to no pedestrian traffic. Illegal dumping is a near nightly occurrence. It is not uncommon to find entire truckloads of illegally dumped material along this stretch of road. Another common practice, for illegal dumpers, is to place a tarp on the bed of their truck, place the material to be dumped on top of it, and then, after arriving on Railroad Avenue, tie one end of a cord or rope to the tarp and the other to a fence or pole and drive away. The effect is to pull the entire load of illegally dumped material from the truck bed and onto the ground. Dumpers can complete this activity quickly, and it is not uncommon to find multiple dumps of this type in the morning or after a weekend, effectively turning Railroad Avenue into a one-way road.

The Southern half of the corridor abuts a small residential neighborhood, where residents are fed up with illegal dumping and other illicit activity. 100% of neighborhood respondents, in a pre-pilot survey, reported that illegal dumping happens frequently in their neighborhood, and expressed frustration with existing efforts to address the issue. At a pre-pilot community meetings, community members expressed skepticism that anything could be done to fix the issue, and that the street had “been this way for years.”
2.3 **DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY**

2.3.1 **Cross-Sector Partnerships**

One of the most important elements of the ACID pilot is its cross-sector partnership. The partnership includes a robust set of Elected Officials from Alameda County and Oakland, who bring significant resources in the form of Public Sector participation, local public sector firms with a physical footprint in the pilot area, as well as strong network of civil engagements, including local faith and non-profit groups, community stakeholder groups, and neighborhood residents. A detailed Cross-Sector of the pilot can be found in Section 4.1 - Cross-Sector Assessment of the ACID Pilot.

2.3.1.1 **Elected Officials:**
- Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley
- Alameda County Sheriff Greg Ahern
- District Attorney Nancy O'Malley
- Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf
- Oakland City Council Member Larry Reid

2.3.1.2 **Public Sector:**
- Alameda County Sheriff's Office
- Alameda County District Attorney
- Oakland Department of Public Works
- Madison Park Academy

2.3.1.3 **Private Sector:**
- AB&I Foundry
- Argent Materials
- Aaron Metals
- Oakland Athletics
- Waste Management

2.3.1.4 **Civil Society:**
- Men of Valor
- The Beautification Council
- Trees for Oakland
- Community Stakeholder Groups
2.3.2 The Three E’s
The ACID Pilot uses The Three E’s (Education, Eradication, and Enforcement), an emerging best practice, to address illegal dumping in its pilot area. Each element of this strategy can be viewed through a proactive and reactive lens, allowing for greater flexibility in implementing the strategy.

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<td>• Community Outreach.</td>
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<td>• Publicize Enforcement Results and Convictions.</td>
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2.3.2.1 Education
Education is the first approach in this 3 pronged strategy to curb illegal dumping. This portion of the strategy is to inform, educate and encourage the community for a safer and cleaner neighborhood. Educating the community about illegal dumping and making them aware of all the sources they have, should reduce the amount of trash being dumped on the streets. Sending outreach packets containing information about the guidelines of recycling, compost, trash, hazardous materials, how to get involved with the community, how to report illegal dumping, how to schedule a pick-up, who to contact about illegal dumping, a reward for catching an illegal dumper and a letter explaining who will take action on this issue will be a major portion of informing the community. This strategy is to provide the tools necessary for the community to help address this plague the piloted area is experiencing. In the long-run, we hope the community will take advantage of their bulk-pick-ups and owners who own multi-building homes, to allow their tenants to schedule their own bulky pick-ups to reduce the amount of trash in their homes. Also to get the community more engaged and be involved with bulky block parties and attend community meetings to be aware of what is going on in their neighborhood. Additionally, other cities shares the same problem about illegal dumping and reaching out to them for suggestions and how they dealt with their issues helped educate the pilot. Some suggestions include, having multiple department coordination, making it easy for constituents to report illegal dumping, modifying waste hauling contracts, making haulers carry manifests, increase penalties and enforcing them on illegal dumpers, which bills and legislatives to support, suggestions on cameras, banners, advertisements, types of apps that can help with illegal dumping, improved communications with different county departments, and better coordination with partners to increase the likelihood of success.
2.3.2.2 Eradication

Eradication is another strategy within the plan to curb illegal dumping. Removing trash and blight from the area will create a visual cue that will deter illegal dumpers. Littering and illegal dumping diminish the quality of life, pollutes our waterways, and causes negative economic impacts on businesses and residents. Eradicating illegal dumped trash from the pilot requires hard work, dedication and manpower. To start with this plan, partners will be needed who are willing to help the cause and the community. Partnering with community based organizations, officials from both the city and the county to coordinate weekly clean-ups and blight removal. The District Attorney’s office has contracted a community based organization advocacy group called Men of Valor to pick up trash in the piloted area on Mondays and Fridays. All the garbage bags that are accumulated will be piled up in an area and recorded by MOV, then, Oakland Public Works will come and pick up the bags up same day or the next. They will also record and track their own tonnage to see if the trash has increased or decreased. Micro-cleaning in the piloted area was also conducted to clear all the little pieces of trash to get ready for weed abatement. Removing the weeds will help with the visual cues creating a clear and open space that will make illegal dumpers hesitate to dump.

2.3.2.3 Enforcement

Enforcement is vital to the pilot project because it sends a message to dumpers that illegal dumping is a major issue. Partnering with The District Attorney’s Office, they have taken the role of providing cameras and license plate readers around the piloted area to catch illegal dumpers in the act, while working to create and/or support new and existing bills that will support enforcing illegal dumping.

Also coordinating with the Environmental Officers and helping them get leads on illegal dumped trash and reporting them to the District Attorney’s Office where they will investigate the crime. Additionally, The Alameda County Sheriff’s Office has committed to patrolling the piloted areas throughout their shifts to try and catch an illegal dumper and/or any crime activity around the piloted area. Providing the presence of Law Enforcement in the piloted area will reduce the amount of illegal activity in the community. Asking for help from businesses and residents in the neighborhood to provide placements for our cameras will help avoid complications with city and PG&E poles. With cameras placed around the perimeter of the pilot, it will make it make easier for the district Attorney’s Office to make a case.

2.3.3 Stages of Illegal Dumping

Within each of these strategic elements is a variety of implementation methods. Enforcement, for example, could be as casual as a “No Dumping, violators will be prosecuted” sign or as severe as a targeting sting operations or stakeouts. Therefore, determining the most appropriate implementation method must include an assessment of the condition of the impacted area, in order to determine its characteristics and thus which stage of illegal dumping the area may be classified as. From there an appropriate intervention can be identified.

Stages of illegal dumping range from Crisis to Clean. Each stage is determined by on-the-ground characteristics, such as the size and frequency of illegal dumping, in addition to the visual appearance of the area.

Within each stage, specific interventions, related to the Three E’s, have been identified as appropriate. This assessment toolkit is available as part of this report in Section 4.2 - Stages of Illegal Dumping.
2.4 **DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTATION**

2.4.1 **The Launch:**
On April 20th, 2019 (Earth Day), the Alameda County Illegal Dumping (ACID) Pilot launched on G Street and Railroad Avenue. All of the participating cross-sector partners attended the launch event, which saw over 20 tons of garbage removed from the pilot locations, including the removal of 26 abandoned cars.

![Image of the launch event](image.png)

*Figure 7: The ACID Pilot launch event took place on Earth Day 2019 on G Street & 90th Avenue in Deep East Oakland.*

In addition to Eradication and Enforcement, and extensive community engagement effort was undertaken, to more fully understand the perceptions and realities of residents and businesses in the impacted area. The ACID Pilot partnered with Alameda County Public Health to do a pre and post survey of the neighborhood, to assess the effectiveness of the pilot, the results can be found in Section 4.3 - 21 Illegal Dumping Survey Findings – November 2019.
2.4.2 How It Worked:
Implementation of the Three E’s Strategy began immediately after the launch of the pilot, and was informed by the Stages of Illegal Dumping guidelines. The pilot locations were determined to be in Crisis Stage, and thus the highest level of intervention was needed.

Sheriff Deputies patrolled the streets at random times throughout the day and night, seeking to identify and connect with residents, as well as to identify illegal dumpers and deter additional illegal activity. The District Attorney’s office worked with private property owners to install high resolution, day/night cameras in dumping hotspots.

Eradication Crews visited the pilot locations daily, to assess and clean illegal dumping that had occurred. Crews were trained to identify indicia within the illegal dumps, which served as investigatory leads for the Sheriff Department and District Attorney. Additionally, large-scale neighborhood cleanups were coordinated to clean the pilot locations on both a micro and macro level.

Tailored educational materials were sent to every residence and business, to inform them how to get involved with the pilot, report illegal dumping, and ensure that their waste makes it into the waste stream properly. Throughout the pilot the group would host neighborhood gatherings to connect residents and businesses with the pilot and each other, and get feedback and reclaim the space for the community.

Throughout the pilot, residents were asked to rate their satisfactions with these interventions, and by far the most popular (75%) was the Clean Up/Eradication efforts, followed by the additional efforts of law enforcement. The least satisfaction (25%) was expressed with the written educational materials. However, all interventions had a net positive satisfaction, meaning more residents were satisfied than unsatisfied with all interventions.

Figure 8: Community Satisfaction with Intervention Methods

Figure 9: Satisfaction with City/County Efforts to Address Illegal Dumping.

2.4.3 Results
Based on the perceptions of community members, satisfaction with the City and County’s efforts to address illegal dumping increased by 11 points during the first year of the pilot, while the share that were unsatisfied dropped 18 points, showing a significant positive shift in perceptions during the pilot period.
3 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 ENFORCE EXISTING LAWS

Partnership with Law Enforcement was effective are reducing dumping and blight. Without law enforcements participation, our efforts amounted to a free garbage service to illegal dumpers. This mentality became clear as the pilot program began seeing success of the eradication side of things. Residents and dumpers were watching our efforts, and noticed that our crews came through at specific times each day. As these trends became clear, we began to see more intentional dumping happening around the time our eradication crews would come through. Residents, who knew the crew was coming, would put out bags of garbage on the street for our crews to pick up, and dumpers would follow behind the crews to find fresh locations to dump in. The first on-view dumping arrest made as a result of the pilot was one such resident, who dumped 8 bags on the street just as our crews were coming through. The crews were able to call the Sheriff Deputies, who showed up and were able to confirm that the resident had broken the law.

Enforcement efforts have spillover benefits as well. In additional to the numerous dumping violations that the deputies were able to cite during their efforts, they were able to apprehend some serious criminals as well. During one of the late-night drive through the deputies spotted a suspicious person with a backpack trying to get over some of the fences in the area. When the deputies approach the individual ditched the backpack, which was later determined to contain a sawed-off shotgun, and ran. Deputies were able to apprehend the individual who, it turned out, was wanted for murder by the City of Oakland.

One of the strongest elements of this approach is evidenced by the large number of community contacts made by the deputies. As they drove through the pilot locations they looked for residents and businesses that were out and about, and would stop to speak with them about the pilot. This gave the deputies the opportunity to know more about who was in the neighborhood and what their experience was, and it also gave the residents a direct line of communication to a law enforcement agency that would show up and respond to illegal dumping requests (something that was not the norm for this community). As a result, many residents and local businesses began sending footage from their cameras to ACSO deputies.

![Figure 10: Deputies, with the help of local residents, identified a truck used to dump illegally in the neighborhood.](image1)

![Figure 11: Deputies worked with Eradication crews to remove the waste and tow the vehicle. Neighbors watched and cheered the effort.](image2)
3.2 **Camera-based Enforcement Strategy**

Enforcement is a crucial yet expensive element of the Three E’s Strategy, and is difficult to scale. For the first 12 months of the pilot the Alameda County Sheriff Office would patrol the pilot locations several times per day, including late into the night. These drive-throughs were effective at engaging community members and demonstrating the presence of law enforcement, yet during that time there was only a single incident where Deputies witnessed someone dumping illegally and were able to intervene. The District Attorney’s Office was able to charge that case, as well as several additional cases which were based on evidence from privately-owned cameras operating in the area—brought into the pilot through community engagement and organizing efforts.

In contrast, the ACID Pilot deployed its Camera-Based Enforcement Strategy in early 2020, and in its first 6 months was able to generate over 90 illegal dumping cases, an increase of 1700%. Cameras were set up in four strategic locations in the two neighborhoods, operated by the environmental unit of the DA’s Office. Eradication crews now send the following to the DA’s Office: photos of mail and similar identifying information; the likely time window in which the incident occurred; photos showing the volume and nature of the trash; the presence of other cameras in the area; precise location and other helpful information. Some of these details are sent via a link to a report in SeeClickFix, an Oakland City app that updates both public works and the community. The DA’s Office then looks for footage of the incident, including information leads such as license plate, make/model, and description of the suspect. Communication between those working in the neighborhood and the DA’s Office has proven critical to the success of these efforts.

Higher-volume and repeat-suspect incidents are now investigated more fully, and warning letters (see: 4.4) are sent for smaller disposals or where investigators have been unable to contact a registered owner. Very recently, upon discovery of an incident where the volume of trash is sizeable and the indicia found indicates that the source is a nearby residence, eradication crews have begun to alert ACSO, which the DA’s Office also provides with any camera footage. Same-day ACSO contact with the suspect or his/her associates has resulted in subjects returning to the scene to clean up their trash, on multiple occasions. We believe the above camera-based strategies, including close communication with the eradication efforts, has led to significant positive changes in the pilot areas.

Note, one of the biggest challenges facing the camera program was locating appropriate locations for camera placement. Part of this has to do with the unique challenges of being a County run program operating within a City. Specifically, Oakland, which has strong privacy ordinances, requires any camera placement on public property, including power and telephone poles, to go through the Privacy Coalition, a public body made up of citizen appointments. This process proved to be such a barrier that the pilot ended up sidestepping it entirely by partnering with adjacent private property owners to install cameras on their property. Unfortunately, this has meant that some key locations are not as well surveilled as they could be, and introduces more risk, such as a property sale, to the longevity of the camera program. However, it is the belief of pilot members that the added flexibility gained from working with the private sector was ultimately worth the tradeoffs.
3.3 Reduce Barriers to Eradication

One of the mid-pilot partners to join the pilot was a local metal recycling company named Aarons Metals, who was having a significant issue with illegal dumping. Many customers would come to Aarons Metals to recycling materials, but found that not all of the materials they brought could be recycled. These materials would be rejected by Aaron’s Metals, yet would soon appear dumped on the street behind the facility. Essentially, anything Aaron’s couldn’t take would just get dumped.

Aaron’s had committed to cleaning up these materials using their own labor and machinery, yet faced steep fees when it came to ensuring the materials ended up in the waste stream property. For any given load of dumped materials, Aaron’s was spending up to $500 to dispose of it properly, which was in addition to the in-kind costs associated with cleaning the materials off the street in the first place.

By engaging in the partnership, Aaron’s Metals was able to work with the Oakland Public Works Department, who provided a dumpster to Aaron’s Metals, to dispose of the waste for free. Essentially, it was a win-win, with Aaron’s Metals able to contribute to cleaning up the neighborhood without bearing costs, and Oakland Public Works (OPW) didn’t have to clean the streets as often or as intensely in order to maintain the space.

Many companies we spoke with throughout the pilot expressed similar barriers to getting involved, mostly having to do with the high cost of disposing of illegally dumped materials. By reducing these barriers to eradication, we were able to bring new partners into the group and scale up our eradication strategies without incurring significant costs.

3.4 Embrace Cross-Sector Partnerships

Similarly, we found that cross-sector partnerships were a key element of our success, and that by matching partners with the intervention method that was the greatest fit we were able to gain efficiencies at many levels. Additionally, the cross-sector nature of the partnership allowed for innovative approaches to addressing illegal dumping.

One of the most successful elements of the partnership was between our private sector industry partners, who did the bulk of eradication work. Similarly to Aaron’s Metals, these partners were happy to engage their staff and equipment in cleaning up the neighborhood, but felt as if they were being punished when they took the materials to the dump and had to pay. In order to improve this process the pilot worked with the OPW, Argent Materials, and AB&I Foundry to design a win-win eradication partnership. Argent Materials, a concrete recycling facility, has many outdoor bays to store and sell their materials. As part

Figure 12: Understanding what each partner brings to the table, such as the private industrial sectors access to manpower and equipment, is key to a successful cross-sector partnership. Here, a 2-Ton front loader is used alongside a bobcat to remove massive amounts of illegally dumped material during the Battle for the Bay.
of the pilot they dedicated a single bay to hold illegally dumped materials from the pilot. All of the eradication efforts in the pilot began to feed into this single repository. When the bay was full Argent would call OPW who would show up with a garbage truck and empty the bay. This partnership allowed all of our eradication partners (Argent Materials, AB&I Foundry, and The Beautification Council) to contribute to the effort using in-kind costs only, and eased the burden on OPW, who only had to pick up illegal dumping from one location rather than spread throughout the pilot area (more than a mile of road way).

Another successful example of this was our partnership with the Oakland Athletics, who joined the ACID Pilot to assist with education. The A’s have a massive media production team, which was far beyond what any of our existing partners had, and offered to use it to produce a series of illegal dumping PSA’s to spread awareness about the Three E’s. The Pilot worked with local high school students, through a partnership with Madison Park Academy, to write the script and draft the storyboard, which depicted Stomper, the mascot for the A’s, using Education, Eradication, and Enforcement to stop an evil mascot “Dumper” from trashing the streets. The A’s production team then worked with the ACID pilot team to produce the videos, highlighting local businesses, organizations, residents, and students working to address illegal dumping. The PSA’s were played on the jumbotron during home games for the A’s, and disseminated on social media by all of the pilot partners.

A full cross-sector assessment for the ACID Pilot can be found in Section 4.1 - Cross-Sector Assessment of the ACID Pilot.

3.5 COMMUNITY ORGANIZING IS KEY TO SUSTAINABILITY

One of the most frequent questions we received when engaging with the community was “what’s going to happen once the pilots is over?” Nearly every community member we spoke with had a story about how some group or organization had come and tried to fix the problems in the past, but eventually gave up and went away, leaving the community in the same, or worse, situation. Therefore, the ACID Pilot sought specifically to engage in community organizing techniques and strategies as a method of building community resilience.

One of the ways the pilot prioritized this was through the makeup of our coalition. From the beginning it was very important that we engaged with the community to create buy in, which meant working with community members and organizations that were already embedded in the community. To that end,
the ACID Pilot worked with local neighborhood organizations (such as Block By Block Organizing) and community-based nonprofits (such as The Beautification Council).

Additionally, throughout the pilot the team sought to engage the community in educational and place making activities. Throughout the pilot the team would host community feedback and training events, inviting community members to provide feedback on the pilot, and learn how to engage with the efforts to prevent, clean, and deter illegal dumping. The Stages of Illegal Dumping toolkit was developed as part of our community training efforts, and was specifically adapted to include the role of residents, neighbors, and community as it relates to each of the stages of illegal dumping. The ultimate goal of resilience building is to assist the community developing the skills and resources needed to address these issues autonomously.

Another successful example of this type of engagement is the Community Potluck series that the Pilot held over the summer of 2019. As the pilot gained traction and made progress in reducing the amount of dumped material that lingered on the streets, the team invited community members to come together and ‘take back the space.’ Potlucks were specifically held at dumping hotspots and troubled areas in an effort to change hearts and minds about utilization of the space.

At the 2nd Community Potluck a community member shared a story about the space. She’d lived in the neighborhood for decades, and walks her dog daily, but always avoided walking down G Street because of the crime and blight that was associated with it. “It never felt safe” she said. She went on to describe that since the pilot had started she had been making an intentional effort to walk her dog on G Street every day, and that she brings her phone with her so she can report dumping that she sees. This shift in community behavior is indicative of the resilience we seek to build. As more community members become educated and engaged, the stronger the communities’ ability to respond is.
3.6 **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design**

Visual cues of deterioration drive illegal dumping of all levels. Whether it is a unregulated hauler looking for a dark alleyway to dump their cargo, or a neighbor who places their household waste on top of an existing dump in their neighborhood, visual cues like graffiti, poor lighting, or existing trash and litter signal that a location is uncared for, and that illegal activities can take place with little regard for being caught.

One of the pilot locations, Railroad Avenue, faced this issue acutely, as the street bordered a major railroad corridor. That side of the street, lacking any private property owners to care for it for nearly a mile, sat neglected—attracting a constant flow of illegal dumping. The “sidewalk” was made of dirt and grew very tall weeds in the summer that obscured dumping, making it harder for eradication crews to maintain the area. The curb was easy for dumpers to drive their vehicles onto, where they would tie their load to the fence and drive away. The railroad rarely maintained their land, contributing to a blighted, overgrown corridor.

The ACID Pilot recognized this challenge early on, as the initial layers of dumping and grime were removed it became easier to see where new dumping was occurring, and it was primarily in areas that were easily accessible, overgrown, and blighted.

In order to intervene, the ACID Pilot brought new partners into the group, including Trees for Oakland, a local non-profit dedicated to planting trees in areas with poor air quality (Railroad Avenue qualified), McGuire and Hester, a local contracting and construction company with deep experience in place making, and Waste Management, the franchise hauler for the City of Oakland. Each new partner was able to contribute to the overall effort in a way that made sense: Trees for Oakland provided 145 trees, McGuire & Hester provided technical advising and excavation assistance, and Waste Management provided free compost and mulch to improve the look and quality of the soil. These efforts were augmented by the existing partnership to installed 145 trees along the railroad side of Railroad Avenue.

Since the trees were planted, the eradication crews have reported a significant decrease in the volume and frequency of illegal dumping along that side of the street. When dumping does happen it is easier to identify and clean due to the lack of weeds.

In addition to the immediate benefits of preventing illegal dumping, the ACID Pilot believes these changes will have significant, long-term benefits for the community, including health, air quality, noise, and other quality of life issues. Since the trees were installed the pilot has received numerous compliments from community members, describing the positive impacts these effort have had on their life and community.
## 4.1 Cross-Sector Assessment of the Acid Pilot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Elected Official (City, County, State)</th>
<th>Public Sector (Countywide Boards)</th>
<th>Public Sector (City of Oakland)</th>
<th>Private Sector (Local Businesses)</th>
<th>Private Sector (Franchise Holder / WHP)</th>
<th>Civil Society (NGOs, Citizen-Groups)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivations:</td>
<td>Responsive to constituent concerns.</td>
<td>Vision &amp; Mission driven.</td>
<td>Direct jurisdiction in pilot area.</td>
<td>Multiple bottom lines: profit, regulations, and public benefit.</td>
<td>Profit.</td>
<td>We live here!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provider of safety net services.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>We have a contract!</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jurisdictional boundaries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Large costs associated with addressing the problem.</td>
<td>Limited capacity to engage.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Existing Labor Agreements.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tied to the status quo / apathy.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Pre-existing city issues: city budget, OPD in federal neighborhood.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Stressed urban community.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Other local issues: political, economic, social.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Ongoing community issues.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Profits marginally capital.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deep knowledge of the neighborhood and community.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Legal challenges.</td>
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<td>Long memory and deep roots.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialized Knowledge:</td>
<td>Specific knowledge of the problem is driven by constituent engagement.</td>
<td>County-wide provider for: Criminal Justice System, Healthcare Services (including Public Health), and Law Enforcement.</td>
<td>Direct Government within City Limits: Law Enforcement, Public Works, Franchise Agreements, etc.</td>
<td>Specific knowledge in their area of expertise (i.e. banking, construction, customer service, etc.).</td>
<td>Waste stream management, from garbage car to dump, for garbage, recycling, and green waste.</td>
<td>Deep knowledge of the neighborhood and community.</td>
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<td>Owner &amp; operator of dump.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role:</td>
<td>Executive / Coalition Builder.</td>
<td>Executive Director.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sources:</td>
<td>Campaign Funding.</td>
<td>Public Funds (Federal &amp; State).</td>
<td>Public Funds (County Generated).</td>
<td>Public Funds (County Generated).</td>
<td>Public Funds (County Generated).</td>
<td>Public Funds (County Generated).</td>
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<td>Restrictions:</td>
<td>Campaign Finance Laws.</td>
<td>Most existing funding streams are already spoken for.</td>
<td>Existing funding streams are already spoken for.</td>
<td>Existing funding streams are already spoken for.</td>
<td>Existing funding streams are already spoken for.</td>
<td>Existing funding streams are already spoken for.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying &amp; Evaluation:</td>
<td>Access to cross-sector partners.</td>
<td>Data aggregation and analysis.</td>
<td>Enforcement actions and results.</td>
<td>Qualitative data: neighborhood, size of cleanup, etc.</td>
<td>Cost estimates.</td>
<td>Qualitative data: quality of neighborhood, improvement of services, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsibility:</td>
<td>Data collection and analysis.</td>
<td>Record keeping and reporting.</td>
<td>Record keeping and reporting.</td>
<td>Record keeping and reporting.</td>
<td>Record keeping and reporting.</td>
<td>Record keeping and reporting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 **Stages of Illegal Dumping**

The “Stages of Illegal Dumping” reference the variety of street conditions as they relate to illegal dumping, from Crisis to Clean. Each stage has specific characteristics, in addition to associated intervention strategies. That is to say that the approach to illegal dumping depends on the condition of the area being dumped on, and should change over time as the interventions are successful.

![Road Map to Address Illegal Dumping](image)

*Figure 17: The Roadmap to Address Illegal Dumping illustrates the characteristics of each stage of dumping, as well as the correlating interventions as it relates to the Three E’s.*
4.3 ILLEGAL DUMPING SURVEY FINDINGS – NOVEMBER 2019

4.3.1 Numbers Surveyed and Limitations

- This survey was intended as a follow-up to a “pre-pilot” survey completed by 18 Railroad Avenue residents during door-to-door surveying on April 27 and May 2, 2019.
- We collected 16 surveys from residents of the Railroad Avenue neighborhood:
  - 1 survey was done with a volunteer at the October 26, 2019 Tree Planting Event
  - 15 were done door-to-door on November 2.
- Note that we spoke to different people during the Oct/Nov and Apr/May survey administrations.
- We were hoping that the two samples of people would be similar in demographics, and that they would broadly represent the views of their neighbors.
- The small sample size limits our ability to generalize the findings to the entire neighborhood.
- Another factor that affects our ability to compare findings for the two samples are demographic differences as follows (see Table 1 in the Data Appendix for percentages):
  - A higher percentage of surveys in Oct/Nov were in Spanish.
  - A lower percentage of respondents in Oct/Nov lived in apartment buildings
  - A higher percentage of respondents in Oct/Nov were between 18-49 years old.
  - A higher percentage in Oct/Nov were Latino.
  - Other race/ethnic differences between the two samples were small (Table 1).
- Despite these limitations, we are noting larger differences between the two samples as indications of improvements over time.

4.3.2 Key Findings

4.3.2.1 Improved Between Surveys

4.3.2.1.1 Frequency of Calling about Illegal Dumping
The percentage of respondents who called the City or County to report illegal dumping one or more times in the last six months increased to 38% in Oct/Nov from 22% in Apr/May (Table 2).

4.3.2.1.2 Confidence in Ability to Call City or County to Report Illegal Dumping
The percentage who were confident in their ability to report illegal dumping to the appropriate City or County increased to 75% in Oct/Nov from 56% in Apr/May (Table 2).

4.3.2.1.3 Satisfaction with City and County efforts to address illegal dumping

A slightly higher percentage of respondents were satisfied with City and County efforts to address illegal dumping in Oct/Nov. There was a larger difference in the percentage of respondents who were unsatisfied with these efforts in Oct/Nov than in Apr/May.
4.3.3 Topics with Few Differences Between Oct/Nov and Apr/May Responses

- See Table 2 for data on topics that have few differences in Oct/Nov and Apr/May responses:
  - Frequency of Illegal Dumping, litter, graffiti and blight
  - Level of satisfaction with City and County efforts to address illegal dumping
  - Participation in neighborhood bulky block parties, free pickup of hazardous waste, individuals picking up trash on the street and attendance at neighborhood meetings.
  - Belief that the neighborhood is a good place to live or work.

4.3.4 Questions Added to the Oct/Nov Survey

4.3.4.1 Satisfaction with Strategies to Improve Illegal Dumping

- We asked respondents about their levels of satisfaction with three ACID strategies:
  - Written materials about illegal dumping and waste that were mailed to your house.
  - Clean-ups to remove dumping and waste [that] are happening more often.
  - Law enforcement efforts to catch and punish people who are dumping illegally.

![Figure 2: Satisfaction with ACID Strategies](image)

As shown in Figure 2, level of satisfaction varied by strategy.

Respondents were most satisfied with Clean-ups, followed by law enforcement efforts and written materials.

More than half of residents did not know about or had not noticed written materials. In the comments section of the survey, 2 people stated that they had never received materials.

4.3.4.2 Use of Cameras to Catch Illegal Dumping

There was a high level of agreement that the City and County should install and monitor cameras to catch people illegally dumping in the neighborhood (88%).

More than half of respondents were interested in having one of these cameras installed outside of their home or business (56%). Thirty-one percent said neither/neutral and 6% disagreed.

4.3.4.3 Confidence that the City or County Would Respond to Calls about Illegal Dumping

We added a question about confidence that a City or County agency I would clean up the illegal dumping that you reported?"

Sixty-two percent of respondents were somewhat confident, 19% were very confident and 19% were not at all confident that the City or County would respond to their call.
4.3.5  Open-Ended Questions

4.3.5.1  What happened When People Called to Report Illegal Dumping

- This open-ended question followed the multiple-choice question about the number of times a respondent had contacted a City or County official to report illegal dumping.
- All six (out of 16) respondents who called about illegal dumping commented on what happened after their call.
  - One comment was about a positive response to the call:
    - “Couches picked [up] - next day”
  - Three comments suggested a negative outcome:
    - “Nothing”
    - “Offered bags to do it ourselves. Was upset with the results.”
    - “Took about 6 weeks before it was picked up”
  - Two comments were general observations (or unclear):
    - “See sheriff parking in morning not at night when dumping happens.”
    - “Other person at Church.”

4.3.6  Suggestions and comments

- Nearly all respondents gave suggestions and comments for the ACID pilot (15 out of 16).
- The most common suggestions were:
  - Increase police and law enforcement (7 comments)
  - Increase community involvement and education about illegal dumping (5 comments)
  - Install and/or monitor cameras (4 comments)
  - “Keep the program going” (3 comments)
  - Patrol at night, when dumping happens (3 comments)
- Along with suggestions, respondents made comments, including:
  - Outsiders come in to dump in the neighborhood (3 comments)
  - I never received written materials (2 comments)
  - People are living in vans or squatting in the neighborhood (2 comments)
  - Disposing of trash is very expensive (1 comment)
- Table 3 in the Data Tables for direct quotes from respondents
### 4.3.7 Data Tables

#### Table 1: Comparison of Demographics In Oct/Nov and Apr/May Railroad Ave. Survey Samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oct/Nov</th>
<th>Apr/May</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of surveys collected</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years living in the Railroad Avenue Area</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of surveys done in Spanish</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Living in places with more than 1 residence (apartments)</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Ages 18-49</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Respondents of each Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/Hispanic</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African-American</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Specified</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% With children living under 18 living in the home</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of respondents of each gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Specified</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 2: Comparison of Findings from the Oct/Nov and Apr/May Railroad Avenue Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oct/Nov</th>
<th>Apr/May</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% who called the City or County one or more times to report illegal dumping.</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% who were confident in their ability to report illegal dumping</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Illegal Dumping, Litter, Graffiti and Blight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Who see illegal dumping <em>often</em></td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Who see litter on streets, sidewalks or yards <em>often</em></td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Who see graffiti/blight (asked in same question in Apr/May) <em>often</em></td>
<td>44%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>% Who see graffiti <em>often</em> (asked separately in Oct/Nov)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>% Who see blight <em>often</em> (asked separately in Oct/Nov)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>% who were satisfied with City and County efforts to address illegal dumping</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulky block parties</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free pick-up of hazardous waste</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Picking up litter or trash they saw on the streets or sidewalks</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community meetings</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Who agree their neighborhood is a good place to live or work.</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
August 9, 2020

[Address Redacted]
Oakland, CA 94603

ILLEGAL DUMPING INVESTIGATION (Case No. 20FED0560)

This office investigates environmental crimes, including illegal dumping. I am assigned an investigation, which has revealed that a significant amount of waste apparently generated by you was illegally disposed of in the area of Louisiana Street and Railroad Avenue in Oakland on or about June 12, 2020.

Please make every effort to contact me, so that I can speak with you regarding this matter.

When contacting this Officer, please refer to the case number listed above.

Sincerely,

NANCY E. O’MALLEY

By ____________________________
Inspector Mike Brown
Phone: [redacted]
Mike.brown@acgov.org
June 17, 2020

San Lorenzo, CA 94580

Re: Notice re Illegal Dumping Violation [Case No. 20FED133]

Dear Mr. and Mrs.:

The Alameda County District Attorney’s Office recently investigated a case in which it was determined that debris that had been generated by you was illegally dumped between April 3 and 6 of 2020, on 82nd Avenue near Railroad Avenue in Oakland, including your financial records. The inspector who contacted you during her investigation reported that you stated you hired someone on April 3rd to haul your trash to the dump.

This office is sending this letter as a warning to be wary of unscrupulous haulers who do not provide receipts prior to payment and who may simply dump your trash -- including your confidential information -- in front of someone else’s home or business. Bags of trash left on the street are commonly ripped open, sending paperwork all over the area. In addition to contributing to neighborhood blight, this invites identity theft.

Please know that illegal dumping is a misdemeanor pursuant to Health and Safety Code 117233, Oakland Municipal Code section 8.11.330(a), and Penal Code section 373.4(b). The foregoing offenses are punishable by jail and significant fines.

Finally, don’t forget not to waste your free annual waste pick-up your garbage service in San Leandro offers (ACI Disposal and Recycling Services). Alameda County Household Hazardous Waste facilities also offer free drop-off. And this link provides disposal options for items like mattresses, e-waste, etc. https://www.recyclewhere.org/. Given the Covid-19 pandemic, we recommend calling any facility prior to drop-off.

If you’d like to contact me, I can be reached at alyce.sandbach@acgov.org

Sincerely,

NANCY E. O’MALLEY
District Attorney

By: Alyce Sandbach
Deputy District Attorney
July 2, 2020

[Redacted information]
Newark, CA 94560-3218

Re: Notice re Illegal Dumping of Trash in East Oakland [CEWPD No. 20FED0412]

Dear Mr. [Redacted info]:

Trash was illegally disposed of on June 2, 2020 at 10:17 in East Oakland, on 89th Avenue and G Street from a white truck registered to you (License [Redacted info]).

Numerous community partners, businesses, and government agencies have been working to improve the physical environment and community well-being in this particular neighborhood. An incredible amount of trash has been picked up by local businesses and residents, trees have been planted, and illegal dumping offenses have been prosecuted.

Illegal dumping is a misdemeanor (see Health and Safety Code §117555, Oakland Municipal Code §§11.330(a), and Penal Code section 373(h)) and punishable by jail and significant fines. At this time, my office has elected to send this warning letter. If you’d like to contact me with any questions or to provide any explanation, please email me at alyce.sandbach@acgov.org.

At this time, this office has elected to send this warning letter. Going forward, please dispose of your trash lawfully. If you wish to contact me with any explanation or questions, please contact me at 510.777.2247 or at alyce.sandbach@acgov.org to discuss the incident. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

NANCY E. O’MALLEY
District Attorney

By: Alyce Sandbach
Deputy District Attorney
5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Aaron Forkash, Aaron Metals
Amaka Watson, City of Oakland
Alyce Sandbach, District Attorney’s Office
Arthur Boon, Trees for Oakland
Austin Bruckner, Supervisor Miley’s Office
Bill Crotinger, Argent Materials
Candice Elder, East Oakland Collective
Cristina Tostado, Community Member
Caleb Smith, Special Assistant to Mayor Schaaf
Claudia Albano, Supervisor Miley’s Office
David Chhoeun, ACID Pilot Assistant
David Ferguson, Oakland Public Works
Daisy Maslan, ACID Pilot Intern
Darryl Stewart, Supervisor Miley’s Office
Debra King-Cooper, Community Member
Erin Armstrong, ACID Team Lead
Fernando Reyes, ACID Pilot Intern
Frank Bonifacio, District Attorney’s Office
Gregory Ahern, Alameda County Sheriff
Heather Ehmke, Beautification Council
Iris Merriouns, Councilmember Reid’s Office
Ivan Huang, ACID Pilot Intern
Jeff Isreal, District Attorney’s Office
James McGrail, Alameda County Sheriff’s Office
John Medlock, Alameda County Public Works
John Tierney, Argent Materials
Jason Mitchell, Oakland Public Works

Ken Houston, Beautification Council
K.J. Williams, Men of Valor
Larry Reid, Oakland City Council, District 7
Libby Schaff, Oakland Mayor
Linda Adams, Community Member
Liz Maker, Public Health Department
Mary Forte, Community Member
Melissa Clack, District Attorney’s Office
Michael Garrahen, Oakland City Attorney Office
Michael Good, Alameda County Public Works
Mike Brown, District Attorney’s Office
Nancy O’Malley, District Attorney
Nate Miley, County Supervisor, District 4
Pat Mossburg, Councilmember Reid’s Office
Patricia Schader, Community Member
Rich Lucia, Undersheriff
Ronald Browder, Environmental Health
Tona Henninger, Supervisor Miley’s Office
Zeydi Gutierrez, AB&I Foundry
...and so many more!