



**City of Seattle**  
Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

## **Clean Cities Initiative Proposal**

The City Budget Office's November 2 updated revenue forecast presents an opportunity to focus additional resources and/or restore services to key priority areas for the City. One such area ripe for additional investments is addressing the City's significant challenges regarding litter, illegal dumping, and trash remediation. Due to a combination of COVID-19 challenges including reduced staffing and lack of volunteer crews, we have seen visible trash accumulating in our parks, rights-of-way, and open spaces at a faster pace than City crews can keep up with. Case in point, data from SPU's Illegal Dumping program shows that while customer complaints have only increased by 1% compared to 2019, the City has experience a 195% increase in the volume of material collected from Q2 to Q3 2020.

In response to this challenge, our City departments have developed a new proposal, the "Clean Cities Initiative," to provide a temporary surge in increased trash pick-up, proactive cleaning in parks and open spaces, and to help business districts manage issues of trash accumulation while working to preserve their livelihoods. This initiative is *not* a proposal to increase encampment removals. It is responsive to the many constituents who are asking their local government to provide basic services by keeping their parks and surrounding areas clean.

Building on some of Council's articulated priorities, below is a detailed proposal that would increase litter abatement routes, stand up new City teams to address trash, and make infrastructure improvements in key areas to improve overall cleanliness. Several of these investments will begin immediately and do not require new resources. **However, in order to begin work as soon as possible, remaining investments would require Council-sponsored amendments to the 2020 Quarter 3 Supplemental ORD as well as amendments to the Proposed 2021 Budget.** The specific changes required in the form of Council Budget Actions (CBAs) are detailed below. We welcome the support of councilmembers who will sponsor these CBAs for future consideration.

### **Clean Cities Initiative Programs**

#### ***1. New Efforts Already Underway (paid for via existing resources, no new budget actions required)***

- A. Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) Quick Response Team** – To increase responsiveness while maintaining base maintenance routes, SPR is piloting a new team to quickly respond to reports of abandoned trash on parkland while ensuring personal property is respected. SPR believes this could address trash left at abandoned encampments and mitigate opportunistic "piling on" throughout the park system when trash is not quickly addressed. These core functions would become part of the new Community Clean Team once launched in December 2020.
- B. SPR Maintenance Jamborees** – Parks has reinstated weekly maintenance jamborees in which staff adopt an "all-hands-on-deck" approach to catch up on deferred ground maintenance and to provide a deep clean of key parks. At these events, SPR staff remove trash and litter; mow grass; remove leaves from parking lot and sidewalks; trim hedges and edging along sidewalks; remove graffiti; pressure wash walkways and benches; and clean out shrub beds and tree wells. The first Jamboree since COVID was held on October 15, 2020 at Miller Park.

- C. **SPR Infrastructure Investments** – Parks is adding new infrastructure to improve the sanitary conditions for users of the park and staff and to support long-term recovery of the parkland. SPR is assessing the 10% of parks that are currently impacted by encampments to determine if additional investments in physical infrastructure (dumpsters, sanicans, sharps collection containers, etc.) are needed to improve the overall cleanliness of the park.

**2. Expansion of Existing Successful Programs (8 months)**

- A. **SPU Community Litter Abatement Program (Expansion – \$430,000)** – More than double the number of Community Litter Routes throughout the city (increase from 8 to 18) to address an increase in trash accumulation and illegal dumping. SPU’s recent analysis of Find It, Fix It data identified ten new hotspots in the city that would benefit from a designated litter route (see attached for proposed routes).

The Community Litter routes help residents and businesses impacted by increased litter by providing twice weekly servicing of identified routes comprised of about 50 block faces. SPU contractors collect and dispose of litter, sharps (syringes/needles/lancets), and bulky items in hot spots with targeted areas changing periodically based on identified need.

*Budget actions:*

- i. *Amend CB 119910 (Q3 Supplemental) to add \$53,750 to the BO-SU-N200B-Utility Services and Operations Budget Control Level in SPU for December 2020.*
- ii. *CBA to add \$376,250 to the BO-SU-N200B-Utility Services and Operations Budget Control Level in SPU for January-July 2021.*

- B. **SPU Encampment Bag Program (Expansion – \$200,000)** – Double service levels of contracted “Purple Bag Program” from 17 to 34 unsanctioned homelessness encampments to address trash collection needs. This proposal is generally consistent with CBA SPU-003-A-001, as proposed by Councilmember Morales.

The objectives of the Encampment Bag Program include improving encampment conditions and reducing the trash in the communities around them. To do this, SPU and its outreach partners distribute purple bags to people living in encampments, which are filled with trash and then placed nearby so the bags can be picked up. The bags are picked up and removed on a weekly basis. Encampments that are particularly large may requires twice weekly removal.

*Budget actions:*

- i. *Amend CB 119910 (Q3 Supplemental) to add \$25,000 to the BO-SU-N200B-Utility Services and Operations Budget Control Level in SPU for December 2020.*
- ii. *CBA to add \$175,000 to the BO-SU-N200B-Utility Services and Operations Budget Control Level in SPU for January-July 2021.*

- C. **SPU Needle Disposal Boxes (Expansion – \$35,000)** – More than double the number of needle disposal boxes throughout the city (increase from 8 to 18 disposal boxes) to address increased need.

The SPU Sharps Collection Program provides safe disposal of "sharps" (syringes, needles, and lancets) with the following services: removal of sharps from public property within 24 hours of notification (e.g., Find It, Fix It) and securing sharps disposal boxes in outdoor locations throughout the city including in several Seattle Parks and Recreation restrooms.

*Budget actions:*

- i. Amend CB 119910 (Q3 Supplemental) to add \$4,375 to the BO-SU-N200B-Utility Services and Operations Budget Control Level in SPU for December 2020.*
- ii. CBA to add \$30,625 to the BO-SU-N200B-Utility Services and Operations Budget Control Level in SPU for January-July 2021.*

- D. SPU Graffiti Rangers (Expansion – \$370,000)** – Increase by 20% the amount of graffiti abatement support for public spaces and private properties that are not already receiving support from a BIAs. Materially, this additional capacity would enable SPU to provide an additional 7,500 sq feet of graffiti removal from public property and address graffiti at 10-15 private properties each month.

SPU's Graffiti Rangers and removal crews from other departments such as SDOT and SPR remove graffiti from City property. Consistent with the Graffiti Nuisance Ordinance, the City strives to meet the 10-day timetable for removing graffiti from its property. The public may report graffiti via online report form, download the Find It, Fix It mobile app, or call the City's Graffiti Report Line at (206) 684-7587 to report graffiti on public property, or on private property that has persisted for a period of time. Hate graffiti gets high priority treatment. The City takes hate, sexist, racist graffiti seriously. SPU's goal is to respond to such graffiti on public property as soon as possible, usually within 24 hours.

*Budget actions:*

- i. Amend CB 119910 (Q3 Supplemental) to add \$46,250 to the BO-SU-N200B-Utility Services and Operations Budget Control Level in SPU for December 2020.*
- ii. CBA to add \$323,750 to the BO-SU-N200B-Utility Services and Operations Budget Control Level in SPU for January-July 2021.*

- E. OED BIA Service Delivery Grants (Expansion – \$400,000)** – Double direct monies to BIAs to increase contracted cleaning business districts in areas heavily impacted. Funds would support installment and servicing of trash cans, litter removal, and graffiti clean-up efforts. Retail businesses, property owners, and residents would benefit from a cleaner, more welcoming environment. This proposal complements CBA HOM-004-A-001, sponsored by CM Strauss, which expands funding for BIAs for outreach and clean-up activities.

*Budget actions:*

- i. Amend CB 119910 (Q3 Supplemental) to add \$50,000 to the OED - BO-ED-X1D00 - Business Services Budget Control Level (BO-ED-X1D00) in OED for December 2020.*
- ii. CBA to add \$350,000 to OED - BO-ED-X1D00 - Business Services Budget Control Level (BO-ED-X1D00) in OED for January-July 2021.*

**3. New Cross-Departmental Program (4 months)**

- A. Community Clean Teams (New – \$4,159,000)** – Create four teams comprised of staff/contracted workers from SPR, SDOT, and SPU to provide an efficient, coordinated response to address illegal dumping, graffiti, and trash in public rights of way, parks, natural areas, and around encampments. Each of the four teams would contain 14-16 staff members who would be fully dedicated to providing 40 hours per week in a dedicated quadrant of the City. The joint effort would be informed by Find It, Fix It and other departmental data sources to provide a coordinated, rapid response to address hotspots throughout the city. Cost covers staffing, supplies, rentals, contracted bio-clean expenses, and waste disposal fees. The intent is to provide a surge to address the backlog of cleaning and grounds maintenance and then pivot to budgeted levels in Q2 2021. Cost is scalable to \$1,039,750 per team for four months, or \$1,039,750 for four teams per month.

*Budget actions:*

- i. Amend CB 119910 (Q3 Supplemental) to add \$498,000 to the SPR - BO-PR-10000 - Parks and Facilities Maintenance and Repairs Budget Control Level in SPR, \$46,000 to the BO-SU-N200B-Utility Services and Operations Budget Control Level in SPU and \$496,000 to the SDOT - BO-TR-17005 - Maintenance Operations Budget Control Level in SDOT for December 2020.*
- ii. CBA to add \$1,493,000 to the SPR - BO-PR-10000 - Parks and Facilities Maintenance and Repairs Budget Control Level in SPR, \$138,000 to the BO-SU-N200B-Utility Services and Operations Budget Control Level in SPU and \$1,488,000 to the SDOT - BO-TR-17005 - Maintenance Operations Budget Control Level in SDOT for January-March 2021.*

**Summary**

- 1. New Efforts Already Underway – Existing Resources
- 2. 8-Month Expansion of Existing Successful Programs – \$1,435,000
- 3. 4-Month New Community Clean Team – \$4,159,000

**Clean Cities Initiative Total Cost: \$5,594,000**, which can be paid for using new revenues from updated revenue forecast.