

Storm Drainage Task Force

The members of the Citizen's Task Force on Storm Drainage are seeking your endorsement of the Resolution which would create and fund the Storm Drain Sewer Improvement program that we have recommended for the City of Oakland.

In 1997, after a citizen-sponsored initiative called attention to the deteriorating state of Oakland's antiquated storm drainage system, the City Council created our Task Force. It is comprised of citizens appointed by the City Council. We have worked for 2 years with City Staff to study Oakland's drainage problems and to recommend a program to remedy those problems. We have already identified \$43,000,000 worth of needed repairs. Our proposal envisions a major capital improvement program to fix these broken, worn-out facilities. We also call for the development of a thoughtful master plan for managing storm water, and the establishment of an upgraded, better-equipped maintenance program. We also recommend implementing programs to improve water quality, restore our creeks, monitor new development, and provide City assistance to citizens who encounter problems with storm water runoff.

We have tried to balance the pressing need to prevent continuing pipe failure, flooding, and erosion against the limited budgets of many Oaklanders. We have tried to set the fee low enough so Oaklanders can afford it, but still high enough to get a meaningful start reducing the enormous backlog of important work. The suggested fee is \$3.75 per month for the typical home. We have worked within the limitations of Proposition 218.

If we enact this program, we can halt the deterioration of our city's infrastructure. We can reduce flooding and property loss and reduce claims against both property owners and the City. If we don't act, but instead continue to let the system deteriorate, we expose ourselves to increasing rates of pipe failures. We will experience repeated emergencies, such as flooded homes and wrecked streets, and mounting litigation. It's up to us to invest in Oakland's future and turn things around.

The City Council is considering both our proposed program and the fee necessary to fund it. Naturally, the City Council is concerned about the willingness

of Oaklanders to support these. We have presented our program at a series of workshops throughout the City in an effort to help our fellow citizens learn the details of the program, as well as why we've reached the conclusion that it's necessary to act now.

We urge you to contact your City Council Member and the Mayor to let them know how you feel about the existing system and the proposed storm drainage program. Let's stop the deterioration that began with the Passage of Proposition 13, when meaningful funding for management of storm drainage and storm water quality ceased in our City.

– Members of the Storm Drainage Task Force
David Kessler et. al.

Claremont Hotel Expansion

The Claremont Hotel is seeking permission from the City of Oakland to add 100 rooms to its present site (it now has 279 rooms). The impact of this building, and the added traffic it would entail, are of immediate and considerable concern to our neighborhood. The Claremont management is also seeking to take control of, greatly upgrade but also make more expensive to use, the Lake Chabot Golf Course.

Neighborhood groups, including the NHPA, are seeking to get more information quickly so that we can understand the scope of what is planned. We hope that Mr. Ted Axe, President and General Manager of The Claremont will let us know more about these plans soon.

We urge concerned people to attend Councilmember Jane Brunner's next community meeting, which will be focussed on the proposed Claremont expansion. City Manager Robert Bobb is scheduled to be present. The meeting will take place on May 6th, 10 A.M.-12 noon, Peralta Elementary School, 460 63rd Street (near Alcatraz).

If we learn anything significant prior to that meeting, we will try to put the information on the Phoenix Association website.

– David Kessler