



CITY OF OAKLAND
newsrelease
Office of the City Attorney

NEWS RELEASE
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Oakland and Caltrans Sign Agreement Ending Legal Fight
Caltrans to Honor Ten-Year Monitoring/Maintenance Commitment

(Oakland, CA) – Oakland City Attorney John Russo, Council President Ignacio De La Fuente and Caltrans District 4 Director Bijan Sartipi met this morning in Oakland City Hall to sign a Letter of Understanding for regular maintenance of Caltrans properties in Oakland. The agreement halts the City of Oakland's pending public nuisance lawsuit against Caltrans in Alameda Superior Court.

"It's more important to solve a difficult problem than pursue a difficult lawsuit," said City Attorney John Russo referring to the City's legal action. "For years all we've wanted was some guarantee that Caltrans would behave as other responsible property owners do in Oakland and now we have that assurance."

"This Letter of Understanding establishes clear guidelines," said Council President, Ignacio De la Fuente, who brokered the deal. "Caltrans has shown a willingness to meet us halfway in cleaning up litter and blight in Oakland. I trust Mr. Sartipi will keep to his word and abide by this agreement."

Caltrans District Director, Bijan Sartipi said, "We will continue to clean up our properties and look forward to holding up our side of this Letter of Understanding."

Caltrans properties, which consist of vacant lots, yards, highway ramps and overpasses, had accumulated refuse, debris and weeds and become blighted. The Office of the City Attorney filed a public nuisance action in August against Caltrans as they have done with other negligent property owners in Oakland.

The Letter of Understanding between the City and Caltrans, while not a legally-binding contract, says the following:

- Caltrans will submit monthly maintenance records of their work in Oakland;

(more)

- Caltrans will also supply records of money spent on maintenance in Oakland and the top 25 populated cities in District 4;
- A semi-annual progress report will be presented to the City Council to take public comment on maintenance of Caltrans' properties;
- Caltrans will meet monthly with Public Works and city staff to target 'hot spots' and other maintenance issues;
- Caltrans agrees to provide a comprehensive listing of all properties in Oakland so that the information can be integrated into the City's computerized mapping system;
- And finally, Caltrans will permit the City of Oakland to hold leasees of their properties accountable to the agreement.

A copy of the Letter of Understanding is available on-line at:
www.oaklandcityattorney.org.

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