

10/12/2021

Dear Council,

We, the Two-Stroke Engine Ad Hoc Committee (Committee) of the Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC), are delighted to learn the Council has received our dossier. It is the product of many months of careful research and discussion by our Committee. The Committee consisted of four commissioners—each from a different district of the City and bringing to the table a wide range of experience from professional backgrounds, including the sciences, law, and public policy. We are proud of our work, and we were delighted when so many members of the public appeared at the public forum where our information was distributed and debated.

The packet before you contains our great City's history of leaf blowers (a proxy for all two-stroke engines); a list of two-stroke engine bans and ordinances across all California counties (current through January 2020, when the Committee prepared the packet to be reviewed by the EAC); a review of the environmental, personal, and community hazards associated with two-stroke engines; and public comments spanning many years. We believe our work demonstrates not only an appetite for action, but also that rapidly changing technological advances make healthier and safer practices more affordable today than in past years.

We urge adoption of Recommendation #1, which would direct the City Attorney to draft a new ordinance. The proposed new ordinance would come back before Council for discussion and consideration of public comment. Ultimately, we hope the Council will expedite action to amend an ordinance that no longer serves the community well.

We do not support Recommendation #2. Referring this matter once again to the Public Safety Committee is unnecessary and only serves to stall the process. As shown in the detailed timeline we have submitted to the City Council, the history has been one characterized by endless delays and refusals to act on what has been a growing demand for change.

The time to act is now. Notably, approximately 20% of California counties are already enacting at least a partial ban on two-stroke engines (please review the packet). Therefore, others have already acted to address this problem, leaving Pasadena in the metaphorical and literal dust. Unfortunately, until now, Pasadena has acted neither as a leader nor a fast follower. But we can catch up.

We recommend you look at this problem through an equity lens, understanding that operators at small enterprises are disproportionately people of color and rely on this equipment for their livelihood. Therefore, we recommend the City provide outreach on the perils of two-stroke engine lawn equipment in English and Spanish (as outlined in Measure T-7.1 in Pasadena's Climate Action Plan). The City, which takes pride in being a leader in so many ways, should also lead by example and completely discontinue use of two-stroke engines (if applicable). We applaud the City for its purchase of electric leaf blowers in recent years, but

more can be done, including requiring City contractors to utilize low-emissions landscaping equipment.

The EAC has fulfilled its responsibility by putting forth a good faith effort to gather and summarize the requisite information and recommend reasonable next steps.

The rest is up to you. City Council should undertake concrete action by directing the City Attorney to draw up an amended ordinance.

Sincerely,

The Environmental Advisory Commission