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**EL PUEBLO DE LOS ANGELES  
HISTORICAL MONUMENT**

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Report: 21-0008

Date: August 24, 2021

To: Board of Commissioners  
El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument

From: Arturo Chavez, El Pueblo General Manager

Subject: **Adopt El Pueblo Historical Monument Board Report and Resolution for the Emergency Use of Parking Lot 5 Located at 711 North Alameda Street as a Temporary Homeless Shelter (El Puente Bridge Housing) for a Period Not to Exceed Three Years and Authorize the General Manager to Negotiate and Execute a License Agreement with Ocean Park Community Center dba The People Concern Under the Terms and Conditions Substantially Outlined in this Board Report**

## INTRODUCTION

Since September 2018, El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument (“El Pueblo”) has hosted the El Puente Bridge Housing on Parking Lot #5 located at 711 North Alameda Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, at the intersection of N. Alameda St. and Arcadia St. This facility has served as the inaugural project for the A Bridge Home (ABH) initiative, the first of twenty-eight (28) temporary housing projects to be built city-wide.

For its entire history, the historic public Plaza and its surrounding community has been recognized by generations of Angelenos of all backgrounds and origins as a space to seek support and assistance. The presence of the El Puente Bridge Housing at El Pueblo continues this tradition of social services to individuals experiencing hardships such as homelessness and other issues. El Pueblo staff have also worked collaboratively with government agencies, non-profit organizations, local business, and the religious community to help provide mental health services, restroom facilities, meal programs, public safety services, and cultural activities to individuals experiencing homelessness in and around the district.

To continue providing these services at the existing El Puente facility, El Pueblo staff requests approval of the recommendations contained in this Board Report, including adoption of the attached Resolution and authorizing the General Manager to negotiate and execute a three-year license agreement with Ocean Park Community Center dba The People Concern (“The People Concern”) to allow them to continue to operate and maintain the existing El Puente Bridge Housing temporary homeless shelter at Parking Lot 5.

## **BACKGROUND**

On January 16, 2018, then Councilmember Jose Huizar introduced a Motion (Council File 18-0044) identifying El Pueblo Parking Lot 5 at 711 North Alameda Street as a suitable site to establish a temporary crisis shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness. The temporary shelter facility provides approximately 45 emergency shelter beds, storage, personal hygiene facilities, supportive services, and 24-hour security. On February 13, 2018, the Council approved the Motion to allocate funding and conduct an environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

In coordination with City and County agencies, El Pueblo participated in several public meetings in 2018 concerning the temporary crisis shelter proposal in order to provide detailed information about this effort.

On March 1, 2018, the El Pueblo Commission adopted El Pueblo Historical Monument Board Report 18-0005 and Resolution 18-0005A that authorized the emergency use of Parking Lot 5 as a temporary homeless shelter system and the placement of a storage facility for homeless persons on Father Olivares Street for a period not to exceed three years. This action by the El Pueblo Commission enabled the reconfiguration of Lot 5 from a parking lot to a temporary housing shelter.

Subsequent to this approval, the El Pueblo Commission further reviewed a follow-up item concerning the on-site operation and management of the El Puente Bridge Housing site. On August 9, 2018, the El Pueblo Commission approved a three-year License Agreement for the operation of the bridge housing program with The People Concern.

The El Puente Bridge Housing opened on September 10, 2018 as the first bridge housing shelter in the city-wide A Bridge Home (ABH) program. The architectural firm of Gensler provided pro bono design and landscaping features for the space.

From late 2018 to the present, the El Puente Bridge Housing has operated as intended with The People Concern providing the stated services in coordination with El Pueblo staff. The combined issues of increasing homelessness numbers and the ongoing disruptive effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have necessitated the continued operation of the facility. The personal storage facility located on Father Luis Olivares Street was removed in January 2021 and is no longer part of the services provided.

In anticipation of this request, on August 23, 2021 a public meeting hosted by the Mayor's Office and El Pueblo provided presentations and updates from The People Concern, Bureau of Sanitation, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), LAPD, and Council District 14. The forum was targeted to Olvera Street Merchants and El Pueblo cultural institutions.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

The El Puente Bridge Housing facility provides access to shelter and beds twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. The easily accessible temporary housing complex comprises a deck with five trailers (three trailers with 15 beds each, one for bathrooms and laundry facilities, and one with offices for case workers). Of the total 45 beds, thirty are allocated for men and fifteen for women.

Three healthy meals are served each day to clients. On-site staff provided focused case management services along with an on-site mental health clinician. Life skills, wellness and enrichment groups are made available to all clients. Since 2018, the El Puente Bridge Housing facility has served nearly 200 different clients with housing and supportive services. Sixty-four (64) clients have been placed in permanent housing.

### **USE OF DEDICATED PARKLAND**

In 1953, the State of California in partnership with the City and County of Los Angeles, established El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historic Park. Subsequently, the California Parks and Recreation Commission adopted the El Pueblo General Plan on April 11, 1980. The purpose of the plan is to establish a permanent historical park to be developed, maintained, and operated as a living memorial to the history and tradition of California life and environment, particularly to preserve the "Old Pueblo of Los Angeles" with the period of significance being 1818 to 1932. The state historic park was transferred to the City of Los Angeles in 1992 with the existing El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument City Department formed in 1994 to oversee management and operation of the historic district.

In the 1947 case entitled *Van M. Griffith, v. City of Los Angeles* (78 Cal. App. 2d 796), the California Court of Appeal, Second District, stated that following an action by the State of California in 1946 that authorized cities and counties "to use park or recreational property for the purpose of erecting temporary and emergency housing facilities for veterans." The use of public park land for temporary emergency housing for veterans is within the legitimate and proper purposes for which park land may be used, keeping in mind that there is no interference with the park purpose and facilities.

In 2018 as part of the review process, the El Pueblo Department determined that placement and operation of the temporary homeless shelter at Parking Lot 5 and the storage facility at Paseo Luis Olivares would produce a minimum impact to the overall operation of the historic district and its amenities. Addressing homelessness meets the department's goals to improve access to and use of El Pueblo.

With the city's continued homelessness crisis and the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the El Pueblo Department determines that there is a need to maintain the existing El Puente Bridge Housing facility on Parking Lot 5 for an additional three (3) years.

### **CEQA AND NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

The temporary use of Parking Lot #5, located at 711 North Alameda Street, Los Angeles, California 90012, as an emergency temporary crisis shelter site to assist individuals experiencing homelessness, for periods of no longer than three years, is statutorily and categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the reasons set forth in the Notice of Exemption and Narrative. Including but not limited to the fact that the project is a specific action necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency, a minor alteration of land, and is a use of existing facilities. This temporary project is allowed under current zoning and is consistent with the General Plan in that it will improve access and use of El Pueblo.

Specifically the temporary project is determined to be statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(4) as a specific action necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency as reflected in CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(c). Public Resources Code Section 21080.27 (AB 1197) is applicable to City of Los Angeles emergency homeless shelters. It is also exempt under Governor's Order N-32-20 as the project used Homeless Emergency Assistance Program (HEAP) funds; and it is categorically exempt pursuant to Public Resources Section 21084 as reflected in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land).

If approved by the El Pueblo Commission, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the Los Angeles County Clerk's Office. The filing will also start a 35-day challenge period for those objecting to the temporary project.

### **BUDGETARY AND OPERATIONAL IMPACT**

El Pueblo is a revenue generating department and responsible for covering direct (salaries), and a portion of in-direct (pension and healthcare), operational costs. In 2018, the loss of revenue for Parking Lot 5 was estimated at approximately \$170,000. Parking flexibility for partnering non-profit organizations, filming requests, and City staff will also be slightly curtailed. However, El Pueblo has determined the El Puente Bridge Housing facility has had a minimal impact to the operations and management of El Pueblo. Its continued presence will have no adverse impact to El Pueblo.

### **LICENSE AGREEMENT**

The three-year license agreement with The People Concern that was executed in 2018 expired on June 30, 2021. In order to continue operations at El Puente, the Department requests authority for the El Pueblo General Manager to negotiate and execute a new three-year license agreement with The People Concern, subject to terms and conditions substantially outlined below. With over fifty (50) years experience in providing social services, mental and medical health care, substance abuse services, and permanent supportive housing, The People Concern has provided excellent management of the

existing facility since 2018 to present.

Terms and Conditions

LICENSOR: El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument

LICENSEE: Ocean Park Community Center dba The People Concern

LOCATION: Parking Lot 5 – 711 North Alameda Street Los Angeles, CA, 90012

TERM: Three (3) years commencing on July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024

OPTION: None

RENTAL RATE: \$0

USE: For the operation, security, and maintenance of an existing temporary bridge housing facility for women and men experiencing homelessness comprised of three (3) housing trailers with 45 beds, one trailer for bathroom and laundry facilities, and one trailer for administrative office space at El Pueblo Parking Lot 5 located at 711 North Alameda Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

HOURS: Licensee shall make the premises available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days per week as an emergency shelter

MAINTENANCE: Licensee will be responsible for all maintenance of the premises, including the trailers.

PARKING: Licensee will have access to parking spaces available at the site.

UTILITIES: Licensee responsible for the costs of all utilities for the premises.

CUSTODIAL: Licensee responsible for all custodial and trash removal.

SECURITY: Licensee responsible to provide security twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week

OTHER: Licensee responsible for paying any required City or County permit fees.

The approval of the recommendations contained in this report will allow the City to proceed with maintaining the existing El Puente temporary homeless shelter.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the El Pueblo Commission adopt the enclosed Resolution 21-0008 A which contains the following actions numbered 1 through 4:

1. Determine that the temporary use of Parking Lot #5, located at 711 North Alameda Street, Los Angeles, California 90012, as an emergency temporary crisis shelter site to assist individuals experiencing homelessness, for a period of no longer than three years, is statutorily and categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the reasons set forth in the Notice of Exemption and Narrative, attached to the accompanying staff report on file with the Bureau of Engineering, including but not limited to the fact that the project is a specific action necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency, a minor alteration to land, and is a use of existing facilities.
2. Find that the emergency use for a period not to exceed three (3) years of operation, of Parking Lot 5, as a temporary homeless shelter site, is consistent with the use of El Pueblo for park purposes.
3. Agree to the temporary use of Parking Lot 5 for a use that would not conflict with the State General Plan or the uses of a City park insofar that it will be allowed as an emergency measure for a temporary, not-to-exceed three (3) year period.
4. Authorize the General Manager of El Pueblo to negotiate and execute a license agreement with Ocean Park Community Center dba The People Concern, subject to the terms and conditions substantially outlined in this report and review by the City Attorney's Office.

And approve action number 5 which states:

5. Encourage the General Manager of El Pueblo to work with the City Administrative Officer (CAO) to potentially identify operational funds to offset the loss of parking revenue from Parking Lot 5.

## RESOLUTION

21-0008 A

### **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF A TEMPORARY HOMELESS SHELTER SYSTEM ON PARKING LOT 5 FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED THREE YEARS**

WHEREAS, the State of California established El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historic Park as a permanent State park; and

WHEREAS, in 1972, the Los Angeles Plaza Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places as comprised of twenty two (22) contributing and eight (8) non-contributing resources, dating from the early 19th Century through the early 20th Century; and

WHEREAS, the California Parks and Recreation Commission adopted the El Pueblo de Los Angeles General Plan on April 11, 1980, containing the long-range development plan for the use and protection of the park as a State park, subject to California Public Resources Code Section 5002.2, and to be restored and developed in a manner that illustrates the story of Los Angeles as well as to continue to serve as a civic space serving the people of Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, the General Plan directs that El Pueblo be maintained and operated as a living memorial to the history and tradition of California life and environment near the site of the early pueblo where forty-four settlers of Native American, African and European heritage journeyed from present-day northern Mexico and established El Pueblo de la Reyna de Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, the State granted the Monument to the City of Los Angeles acting by and through its Recreation and Parks Department upon the express condition that the Monument is to be maintained as a City as well as a State park, subject to the State General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the State General Plan identifies Lot 5 for use as a parking lot whose purpose is to enhance the ability of visitors to the Monument to access and enjoy the Park; and

WHEREAS, El Pueblo Historical Monument was transferred to the El Pueblo Department, and pursuant to Section 22.620 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code (LAAC), the El Pueblo Commission is responsible to “operate, manage, maintain and control” the Monument including the parking lots, “in a manner that will preserve and positively reflect the early Mexican history of the City, revitalize the Mexican marketplace atmosphere”; and

WHEREAS, the Monument is a major cultural and educational destination containing eight museums, three exhibition spaces, two churches, the Olvera Street Mexican Marketplace, and numerous cultural and traditional events and amenities for the enjoyment and education of students, families, and international visitors numbering more than two million visitors a year from the greater Los Angeles area, the United States and from around the world prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, El Pueblo Historical Monument, especially in the Plaza and south Monument area, provides a unique and desirable venue for filming in Los Angeles that generates millions of dollars for the City and the local economy; and

WHEREAS, LAAC Section 22.632 provides the Commission with the authority to enter into contracts for services and leases for the operation, management, maintenance and control of the Monument and to preserve the stability and character of Olvera Street; and

WHEREAS, El Pueblo Historical Monument has seen a substantial increase in the surrounding population of people experiencing homelessness, with several encampments located on Spring Street, Arcadia Street, North Broadway, and adjacent to Father Serra Park, which have created health and safety concerns for commercial merchants, residents and the general public; and

WHEREAS, on April 19, 2017, the City declared an emergency shelter crisis to help provide for additional shelters to be established in the City to alleviate the current shortage of shelter beds and now wishes to use Parking Lot 5 to provide temporary homeless housing; and

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2018, the El Pueblo Board of Commissioners adopted Resolution 18-0005A that authorized the reconfiguration and use of Lot 5 to host a temporary homeless shelter since titled "El Puente Bridge Housing;" and

WHEREAS, the California Court of Appeal, Second District, in a 1947 case entitled *Van M. Griffith, v. City of Los Angeles* (78 Cal. App. 2d 796), stated that following an action by the State of California in July, 1946, to authorize cities and counties "to use park or recreational property for the purpose of erecting temporary and emergency housing facilities for veterans", the use of public park land for temporary emergency housing for veterans is within the legitimate and proper purposes for which park land may be used, keeping in mind that there is no interference with the park purpose and facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument Authority hereby:

1. Determines that the temporary use of Parking Lot #5, located at 711 North Alameda Street, Los Angeles, California 90012, as an emergency temporary crisis shelter site to assist individuals experiencing homelessness, for a period of no longer than three years, is statutorily and categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the reasons set forth in the Notice of Exemption and Narrative, attached to the accompanying staff report on file with the Bureau of Engineering, including but not limited to the fact that the project is a specific action necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency, a minor alteration to land, and is a use of existing facilities.
2. Finds that the emergency use for a period not to exceed three (3) years of operation, of Parking Lot 5, as a temporary homeless shelter site, is consistent with the use of El Pueblo for park purposes.
3. Agrees to the temporary use of Parking Lot 5 for a use that would not conflict with the State General Plan or the uses of a City park insofar that it will be allowed as an emergency measure for a temporary, not-to-exceed three (3) year period.
4. Authorizes the General Manager of El Pueblo to negotiate and execute a license agreement with Ocean Park Community Center dba The People Concern, subject to the terms and conditions outlined in Board Report 21-0008 and review by the City Attorney's Office.



Approved and adopted the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument Authority following a roll call vote:

Ayes:\_\_\_\_ No:\_\_\_\_ Abstentions:\_\_\_\_

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_