

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: December 4, 2020

TO: Honorable Mitch O'Farrell, Chair
Honorable Monica Rodriguez
Honorable Mike Bonin
Honorable Marqueece Harris-Dawson
Honorable David Ryu
Homelessness and Poverty Committee

FROM: Enrique C. Zaldivar, Director and General Manager
LA Sanitation and Environment



SUBJECT: LA SANITATION AND ENVIRONMENT (LASAN) - REPORT BACK ON PAXTON / BRADLEY PILOT PROJECT / DEDICATED HOUSING RESOURCES / COURT ORDER(CF#20-1406)

On October 27, 2020 Motion 20-1406 (Rodriguez, Martinez) was introduced instructing LA Sanitation and Environment (LASAN) to consult with the City Attorney and report back to Council with findings on the following:

- Appropriate notification, signage, documentation, and procedures for managing personal property at the conclusion of operations to house unsheltered residents at locations identified in the Court Order issued by Judge David O. Carter.
- Collaboration with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to ensure a functional workflow for both agencies during housing operations.

Background

Beginning in 2019, LASAN worked with the office of Councilwoman Monica Rodriguez (Council District 7) and various entities to develop and coordinate a process for addressing an encampment underneath the 118 freeway on Bradley Ave at Paxton St in Pacoima (Paxton/Bradley encampment) with the goal of the location being a pilot for conducting methodical and integrated work for housing unsheltered individuals and addressing the clean-up of leftover items or unwanted items that sometimes remain when unsheltered Angelenos transition to housing from an encampment and become sheltered.

After and upon extensive outreach by LA Family Housing and LAHSA approximately 67 individuals were housed utilizing available housing options in the San Fernando Valley. As result of the housing, there was a significant amount of trash, debris, and unattended property left at the location. Working with service providers, LASAN first attempted to determine ownership of the property and work with unsheltered residents who were willing to return to the location to assess the property. Providing bags and decontamination for the items they wished to keep and disposing of, with their consent, items they no longer wanted.

After several days of collaborative work, LASAN posted the location for cleaning and conducted a standard clean-up that was compliant with Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) 56.11. In support of this process any unattended property that did not have an owner present was documented and stored. LASAN

bagged/tagged/stored 46 bags of personal property for the 90 day+ period and disposed of approximately 3,000 lbs. of solid waste, 150 lbs. of hazardous waste along with 60 items of sharps / drug paraphernalia.

This pilot followed existing protocols and procedures established by LASAN, the Designated Administrative Agency under LAMC 56.11. The following proposal is based on what was learned conducting the pilot during the Paxton / Bradley Housing and Cleanup operation. Critical to the successful transition operation at Paxton/Bradley was the central coordination role the Office of Councilmember Rodriguez played throughout the process.

Proposals

LAMC 56.11 contains guidelines and protocols which enable LASAN to assist with the clean-up of these locations via a 24-hour posted comprehensive clean-up. Once unsheltered individuals have been housed, the posted clean-up is the most efficient way to remove trash and debris as well as document and store unattended items for potential retrieval at a later date. LASAN will continue to work with all parties to offer voluntary disposal of unwanted material both prior and during to any cleanup operation to assist with the process. To work alongside the outreach service providers and provide ongoing LASAN support through the housing process, LASAN has the following recommendations:

1. 30-20 days prior to housing date out: Each Council District should coordinate between LASAN and service providers to ensure smooth workflow and process.
2. 10-1 days out: Following initial visits conducted by the service provider, LASAN working in conjunction with the Council District, will post the identified site for comprehensive cleaning. Postings can occur between 72 and 24 hours of each clean-up and must be completed within one service day. Multiple cleaning days require separate postings.
3. One day after final outreach visit: LASAN will conduct a posted comprehensive clean-up to address property that should be disposed of, any identified and documented health hazards, and identifying personal property that needs to be bagged/tagged/stored. At the conclusion of the clean-up LASAN will provide post removal notices for bagged/tagged/stored items.

Recommended Procedure: Underpass / Overpass Homeless Encampment Clean-up

The following process should be completed in order to commence the clean-up operation:

Step #1 – REFERRAL: LASAN will initiate the homeless encampment clean-up process by verifying the encampment is located on the public right-of-way and/or a City owned, managed, or maintained property, and by taking photographic evidence of the location. LASAN will then submit the information to the respective Council District. The information may consist of but may not be limited to the following:

1. Address and/or cross street locations of the homeless encampment (or closest address)
2. Description of the encampment(s), including photographs of the encampment
3. Additional location description (i.e. under bridge, on overpass, etc.)

4. Date location visited /assessed

Step #2 – LAHSA Engagement: Outreach to the unsheltered individuals in the area will be conducted by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) or Other Homeless Service Provider (OHSP) to inform the unsheltered residents of the upcoming clean-up efforts and the requirement to relocate both themselves and their possessions from the designated areas prior to the clean-up date/time. During these visits, LAHSA or the OHSP shall offer available assistance and social services to the unsheltered individuals in the designated area. Upon the last day of scheduled site visits, LAHSA will work with LASAN staff to identify unsheltered individuals, their property for storage, and any property that is voluntarily to be disposed of as trash. LAHSA with assistance from LASAN will seek the voluntary consent of disposal of property.

Step #3 – CLEAN-UP SCHEDULING: LASAN shall work with Council Districts to schedule encampment clean-ups in conjunction with LASHA or OHSP site visits.

Step #4 – NOTICING: A notice of comprehensive cleaning will be posted at the clean-up location a minimum of 24 hours in advance of the clean-up date/time and should be posted at the start of the last site visit that is conducted by LAHSA or OHSP. The posted notice shall be photographed by LASAN to document the notification of the pending clean-up. The notice shall be valid for only 72 hours from posting. If the encampment clean-up cannot commence within 72 hours from posting, a new posting must occur before the clean-up may commence. A “Post Removal Notice” will be posted at the location at the end of operations providing information on the storage and retrieval of unattended property.

Conclusion

The above outlined findings from the operation conducted at Paxton and Bradley serve as a guide to begin the discussion on how to address the transition of individuals from encampments to interim or permanent housing. The goal is to facilitate a more collaborative working relationship between LASAN, LAHSA and other service providers, and with Council Offices serving as the central coordinating agencies.

Thank you in advance for your continued support of LASAN. If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of these items further, please feel free to contact me or Jose P. Garcia, Assistant Director, at (213) 485-2210.

LBM/ECZ:lbm

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