

REPORT FROM

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Date: August 10, 2021

CAO File No. 0220-05734-0029

Council File No. 21-0350

Council Districts: 11

To: The City Council

From: Matthew W. Szabo, City Administrative Officer



Subject: **Report Back on Evaluation of Site Feasibility and Identification of Funding for Potential Homeless Interventions in Council District 11**

SUMMARY

On May 26, 2021 the City Council adopted recommendations from the Homelessness and Poverty Committee relative to a Motion (Bonin - Ridley-Thomas, C.F. 21-0350) instructing the City Administrative Officer (CAO) to evaluate site feasibility and identify funding for potential homeless interventions at various locations in Council District 11. These sites include: Will Rogers State Beach at 17000 CA-1; Dockweiler State Beach at Lot 3, 11999 Vista Del Mar; Dockweiler State Beach RV Park at 12001 Vista Del Mar; Marina del Rey at Lot 2, 13477 Fiji Way; a Culver City owned site; privately-owned land near 5000 Beethoven Avenue; Westchester Park; Mar Vista Park; Los Angeles World Airports land; and the West Los Angeles Municipal Building at 1645 Corinth Avenue.

The CAO followed its feasibility process as outlined in C.F. 20-1351 to assess the proposed sites. The CAO worked with the Bureau of Engineering (BOE), the Department of General Services (GSD), and the public and private owners of the sites to determine feasibility. Based on these assessments, the majority of the sites are not feasible for homeless interventions, mainly due to infrastructure constraints. The Marina del Rey and the Dockweiler State Beach RV Park sites are still under assessment, and the Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) is communicating with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) about the feasibility of using airport land for homeless interventions. Finally, the City of Culver City has decided to proceed with a homeless intervention on the site it owns in Council District 5, near the border of Council District 11. Discussions regarding partnering on this effort are ongoing.

Council District 11, like Council Districts 1, 5, 7, and 12, lacks City-owned land that can be used for homeless interventions. For these areas, we should continue to identify privately-owned sites that can be leased for homeless interventions and request that the Los Angeles Housing Department pursue properties under the Project Homekey 2 Program. Most of these districts benefited from Round 1 of Project Homekey. In Council District 11, two motels/hotels were purchased, and are now operating as interim housing.

If the sites under assessment are found to be feasible for homeless interventions, the CAO will

include recommendations for the proposed sites' use and funding in upcoming reports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council note and file the report as no further action is required at this time.

DISCUSSION

The following sites were assessed and found to be infeasible for the reasons outlined below.

1. State Owned Beach Sites for Tiny Homes, Safe Parking, or Safe Sleep

Will Rogers State Beach and Dockweiler State Beach are owned by the State of California and managed by the County of Los Angeles. The BOE assessment determined that these sites are cost prohibitive for the following reasons:

- *Lack of Infrastructure Capacity:* The beach sites were not built for 24/7 residential use, and thus, the sewer infrastructure is not suitable for homeless housing.
- *Lack of Utility Capacity:* The power capacity would have to be increased at both beaches, and the nearest transformer is located 1,000 feet from the sites.
- *Fire Safety:* There are no fire hydrants near these two beaches, and new hydrants would need to be installed as a requirement for residential use.

2. Privately Owned Site near 5000 Beethoven Avenue for Safe Sleep

The site is a peninsula of vacant land located southeast of 5000 Beethoven Avenue and is enclosed by the I-90 Freeway, the Ballona Creek, and the Centinela Creek Channel. The BOE assessment determined this site as infeasible for the following reasons:

- *No Access to Site:* The site has no pedestrian or vehicle access.
- *Lack of Nearby Utilities:* Utilities are situated far from the site, and capacity is uncertain. The closest sewer connection is 500 feet away, the closest water source is 800 feet away, and there is no apparent source for power within 1,000 feet.
- *Expensive to Develop:* The terrain is rough and substantially contoured, which would require considerable grading and soil removal to level the site for access and placement of pallets for administrative purposes, hygiene trailers, and tent spaces.

3. City Owned Westchester and Mar Vista Parks for Safe Sleep

The Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) assessed the proposed sites, and recommended that these parks not be used for the following reasons:

- *Sites Are Not Underutilized:* Prior to the pandemic, both Westchester and Mar Vista Parks experienced varied and robust recreational usage. Data from both parks show that on average more than 6,000 youth participants attend and utilize the parks and facilities. The parking lots are needed for pick up and drop off for programming and aquatics. Both parks returned to normal operations on June 14, 2021, and

programming is planned through the end of the fiscal year. The RAP sites that are being used for homeless interventions are on underutilized park land.

- *Revenue Generating*: These parks generate more than \$500,000 in annual revenue for RAP.

These two parks should be considered for targeted outreach to connect people experiencing homelessness to housing and services through “Encampment to Home” or similar models.

4. City Owned West LA Municipal Building for Temporary Shelter

The evaluated site at the West LA Municipal Building is an approximately 5,500 square foot vacant office space with 24 enclosed offices on the second floor of the building. The State Emergency Shelter Declaration allows the City to use non-residentially zoned properties for shelter according to alternative health and safety standards. These standards limit shelter sleeping quarters to the ground floor. This standard has also been codified in the Los Angeles Municipal Code § 91.8605.2, 2.E. The Municipal Building is zoned as public facilities, and thus, not feasible for shelter use. Even if the zoning was changed to accommodate shelter, the available space is too small to make an interim housing project viable. An interim housing facility should be a minimum of 13,000 square feet to provide up to 70 beds, administrative offices, hygiene facilities, common space, and storage, to make it financially and programmatically viable.

The following sites are still under assessment.

1. County Owned Marina del Rey Site for Tiny Homes or Safe Sleep

The proposed Marina del Rey site, located in Lot 2 at 13477 Fiji Way, is an underutilized parking lot owned by the County of Los Angeles adjacent to a boat launch and commercial buildings.

- *Utility Capacity*: BOE’s final assessment and Rough Order of Magnitude is pending a report from the County Department of Public Works on sewer, water, and power capacity.

2. State Owned Dockweiler Beach RV Park for RV Safe Parking

The proposed site at 12001 Vista Del Mar is still being assessed by BOE.

3. Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) Owned Site for Tiny Homes, Safe Parking, or Safe Sleep

LAWA has identified possible sites for homeless interventions and requested that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) review for approval. The FAA would have to agree to allow the use of airport land for homeless housing and waive the requirement that land purchased with FAA funds be leased at market rate.

Culver City Owned Site for Tiny Homes or Safe Sleep

The proposed site is a parking lot in the City of Los Angeles but owned by the City of Culver City in Council District 5, near Council District 11. Culver City is not interested in leasing the site to the City. Instead, Culver City plans to develop the site as a homeless intervention and is open to collaborating with Council Districts 5 and 11 regarding the utilization of the intervention. BOE has provided sample layouts for Tiny Home and Safe Sleep Villages.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the General Fund at this time.

FINANCIAL POLICIES STATEMENT

The recommendations in this report comply with the City Financial Policies.

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