

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Janet Zaldua

**Date Submitted:** 08/24/2021 05:29 PM

**Council File No:** 21-0350

**Comments for Public Posting:** The Marina del Rey Convention and Visitors Bureau has submitted the attached letter for public comment to the City of Los Angeles's Homelessness & Poverty Committee in response to Agenda Item #5: CAO Officer report, dated August 10, 2021, relative to evaluating site feasibility and identification of funding for potential homeless interventions in Council District 11. We are requesting that the final report also include a Community Impact Study to assess the impact homeless housing at Marina del Rey's public boat launch ramp parking lot would have on public safety, loss of tourism, and local businesses surrounding the site. The site is located in a tsunami zone, and is included as a MAJOR evacuation site in the LAX emergency evacuation plan in response to a plane crash or terrorism attack. In addition, the lot is used as a helicopter landing zone for rescue and evacuations from those experiencing life-threatening emergencies in the ocean. The site is steps away from where the public back up large boats and watercraft on trailers into the water. There are multiple safety concerns that were not included in the feasibility study. In addition, use of the site for homeless housing would have impact on local tourism. We hope these points will be taken into account as the site is further evaluated. Thank you for your consideration.

# MARINA DEL REY®

convention and visitors bureau



August 24, 2021

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL  
HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY COMMITTEE  
ROOM 1010, CITY HALL  
200 NORTH SPRING STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

ATTN: COUNCILMEMBER MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS, CHAIR  
COUNCILMEMBER KEVIN DE LEÓN  
COUNCILMEMBER JOE BUSCAINO  
COUNCILMEMBER MONICA RODRIGUEZ  
COUNCILMEMBER NITHYA RAMAN

RE: AGENDA #5, THURSDAY, AUGUST 26

Dear Honorable Council Members:

We are deeply concerned as a business community about the feasibility report recommending further evaluation on Parking Lot #2 and the Marina del Rey Public Boat Launch ramp as a location for a homeless housing site. The tourism and hospitality businesses in Marina del Rey strongly believe that temporary housing or a safe sleep site in the Marina near visitor attractions such as the public boat launch ramp, dining establishments, retail shops, the Visitors Center, or any of the Marina's seven hotels will have a damaging effect on business and deter visitors and business travelers from coming to the Marina for recreation, business, or social celebrations.

We believe Parking Lot #2 / Marina del Rey Public Boat Launch ramp is **not a suitable alternative location** for homeless housing, because a safe sleeping site or temporary housing would 1) impact public safety for all and serve as a barrier to its use for recreational boating activities, 2) utilize space that is currently designated as a site for emergency disaster response and helicopter emergency landing zone and 3) negatively impact local businesses that rely on tourism, especially during their recovery efforts from the pandemic.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

- 1) Every year the Marina del Rey Public Boat Launch Ramp provides coastal access to tens of thousands of boaters who do not have or cannot afford their own boat slips. Part of this access means boaters expect to find clean, safe and attractive facilities to launch their boats and park their cars. These boaters, along with local residents and tourists park their cars in Parking Lot 2 for recreation, social celebrations special events, and direct access to the water. Note: Thousands of Angelenos who use the Public Boat Launch Ramp *come from every councilmember's district in Los Angeles*. Data from our 2017 Visitor Survey and recent ticket registration information for the 2021 Marina Drive-In and 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks shows that residents from every part of Los Angeles County come Marina del Rey and the public boat ramp parking lot to enjoy recreational boating, water activities, and special events. Los Angeles County residents and tourists will be impacted by this decision.
  - a) As noted by the Marina del Rey Lessees Association in an April 28th letter to Los Angeles County 4th District Supervisor Janice Hahn, boat launch ramps can be "dangerous places and are not pedestrian-friendly locations suitable for bystanders."
  - b) Boaters have unique parking needs compared with other visitors to the Marina. They require larger parking stalls to accommodate trucks and vehicles with trailers. They need a direct pathway for carts to transport equipment from their vehicles to their boats, away from areas of pedestrian and bicycle activity, where they can have a clear and conflict-free path to the launch ramp.
  - c) Placing homeless housing in a parking lot steps away from where boaters back up boating vessels into the launch ramp and operate large watercraft is a public safety concern for the homeless who would have direct walking access to the boat launch ramp located just a few steps from the proposed housing location. It is a liability issue for the boaters and the County of Los Angeles. Utilizing this location poses a risk to public safety.
  - d) Marina del Rey, which consists of 400 acres of land, has very limited open space and parking. This parking lot is the only area within the Marina that provides a launch ramp that can be used in the event of a major emergency or catastrophe. As we expressed previously to Supervisor Hahn, the Public Boat Launch Ramp is **designated as an FAA-approved emergency disaster and evacuation site by LAWA/LAX and plays a key role** in the LAX Airport Emergency Air/Sea Disaster Plan especially as a location used for various staging needs in the event of a disaster. Per the LAWA / LAX Airport Emergency Plan and its AIR-SEA Disaster Plan, Marina del Rey Boat Launch Ramp is designated for MAJOR recovery efforts. MAJOR is defined as 10 or more survivors. In fact, there are two 40' fire boats stationed in Marina del Rey's fire station that can accommodate up



to 25 survivors/victims each. It is important to note that the L.A. City Office of Administrator's feasibility report missed this critical point. It is irresponsible for the City of Los Angeles to overlook this important piece of information when assessing a location for the unhoused population.

- e) Parking Lot 2 is also designated for use as an emergency landing zone\* for helicopters and ambulances to airlift trauma patients experiencing life-threatening emergencies to nearby trauma centers. A temporary shelter should not be placed in a location that is used as an FAA-approved "major evacuation site." During a catastrophic air or sea disaster, helicopters, ambulances, fire trucks along with first responders and disaster victims would need space to function. For this reason alone, the lot should remain clear and available for use in the event of emergency operations.

*\* For example, in 2015 the boat launch ramp was used for a helicopter medical evacuation due to a scuba diving accident. <https://local.nixle.com/alert/5511347/>.*

- f) The proposed site is within a tsunami zone. Just this year in March, the California Geological Survey released new tsunami maps that include Marina del Rey and the public boat launch ramp parking lot. It is recommended that people escape on foot to higher ground during a tsunami. This news was reported by Los Angeles Times and several other news outlets in the country. It is absolutely unsafe to place a temporary shelter or encourage the unhoused to park their cars in an area that could be subject to a tsunami, flooding or worse! It would be challenging for an unhoused individual experiencing physical or mental disabilities to escape on foot to a place of higher ground.

## **NEGATIVE IMPACT ON BUSINESSES THAT RELY ON TOURISM**

- 2) Economic impact and public safety are at the core of this issue. Both need to be heavily considered in evaluating Marina del Rey's public boat launch parking lot as a safe sleeping site or tiny home village. Parking Lot 2 is surrounded by businesses frequented by local residents and tourists throughout the year. While the lot may seem underutilized during the weekdays, its use increases on the weekends and holidays when boaters are accessing the coast. In addition, the lot's use increases significantly during major annual events that draw thousands of visitors to the region, including the 4th of July Fireworks, Marina del Rey Holiday Boat Parade, Marina del Rey Summer Concert Series, Marina Spooktacular, and Snow Wonder.
  - a) Local businesses that border Parking Lot #2 include: Three new restaurants and Trader Joe's at Boardwalk Shops at Marina; 32 retail stores and 8 restaurants at Waterside Shops; and the Marina del Rey Visitors Center which is less than 20 feet away. Many of the staff of these businesses park in the lot adjacent to Lot 2

and walk alone to their work site and back to their cars at all hours of the day and night.

- b) The Marina del Rey Visitors Center is located 20 feet from the proposed Lot 2 site. Pre-pandemic, the Visitors Center staff in Marina del Rey encountered homeless people urinating on the reception area floor, defecating near the entryway front doors, belligerent behavior with our staff, and public intoxication on the grounds of our Visitor Center. The Visitors Center staff have called the Sheriff on numerous occasions to respond to these occurrences. In addition, the Visitors Center has had to incur, at its own expense, a private security guard to ensure public safety of visitors and staff due to the increase of hostile encounters with homeless individuals and the loitering of homeless individuals on the visitor center grounds.
- c) Additionally, the 10-acre Burton Chace Park at the end of Mindanao Way is within walking distance to Parking Lot #2 and often becomes the overflow parking for local residents, tourists, and families with children who come to the popular park for annual events, community classes, and recreational activities.
- d) The popular Marvin Braude Bike Trail also runs along Fiji Way and Admiralty Way next to Public Lot #2. The paved bike path is used by thousands of locals and visitors each year.
- e) In 2021, due to the pandemic affecting public events and crowd control, the Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors and Marina del Rey Convention and Visitors Bureau pivoted away from the Summer Concerts and Summer Movie Nights at Burton Chace Park and as a safe alternative, created the Marina Drive-In at Parking Lot 2. The events have seen up to 200 cars per night on Fridays and Saturdays as the public continues seeking COVID-safe activities. As a result, local businesses benefit from the movie-goers attending the events.

Marina del Rey's businesses are in the midst of pandemic recovery efforts. When tourism suffers, it has a devastating impact on our businesses, which were forced to lay off more than half of their employees over the last year due to the pandemic. Marina del Rey's hotels, restaurants, and tourist attractions generate close to 3,000 service level jobs for Los Angeles County residents. Our frontline workers are the heart and soul of Marina del Rey's tourism industry.

The feasibility report stated that the Bureau of Engineering's final assessment and Rough Order of Magnitude is pending a report from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works on sewer, water, and power capacity. **We are requesting that the final report also include a Community Impact Study assessing the risk to public safety** in placing housing near a boat launch ramp where trailers, heavy machinery and watercraft vessels are operated and backed



into the water and where space currently designated for emergency operations would become unavailable for triage, staging needs, and emergency helicopter landing.

We also request that the report include a feasibility assessment on the impact to local tourism businesses, including the retail, dining, hotel, and recreational establishments that risk loss of business should the housing be placed within close proximity to their properties. As it stands, the study only assesses the logistical feasibility of placing homeless housing at the launch ramp parking lot and completely disregards any assessment of public safety, loss of tourism, and the long-term economic impact resulting from a decrease of tourism, such as what Venice Beach businesses experienced when the beach boardwalk became inundated with homeless encampments during the pandemic.

Marina del Rey is not located within the City of Los Angeles, which conducted the feasibility report. To our knowledge, the City of Los Angeles has not reached out to local business to determine whether the location would be feasible for their economic vitality or public safety. **We believe it is vital for the County of Los Angeles and our Board of Supervisors to require that the scope of the feasibility be expanded to include the impact homeless housing at Lot 2 would have on their very own constituents, tourism sector, and Marina del Rey community at large.** Los Angeles County is enormous in size. Surely there are a vast number of alternative sites that would be better suited for homeless housing than the parking lot of a boat launch ramp surrounded by tourism businesses, attractions, and the many locals, visitors and families that utilize the parking lot to gain access to the coast and enjoy water recreation.

Marina del Rey is a small tourist destination comprised of 400 acres of land that is surrounded by hotels, restaurants and visitor attractions that are struggling to recover from the devastating economic losses they experienced during the pandemic. We urge the Honorable Councilmembers of the Homelessness & Poverty Committee, City of Los Angeles Chief Administrative Officer Matt Szabo and Los Angeles County 4<sup>th</sup> District Supervisor Janice Hahn to consider the impact homeless housing at the public boat launch ramp parking lot would have on public safety, tourism, economic vitality, and all businesses in the Marina that would be directly impacted by this decision.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Janet Zaldua', with a stylized, flowing script.

Janet Zaldua  
CEO

Marina del Rey Convention and Visitors Bureau

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Tim Riley - Marina del Rey Lessees Association

**Date Submitted:** 08/24/2021 12:56 PM

**Council File No:** 21-0350

**Comments for Public Posting:** Please find attached a comment letter on Agenda Item #5 of the Homelessness & Poverty Committee meeting of Thursday, August 26, 2021. The Marina del Rey Lessees Association requests a community impact study to be conducted for the feasibility study of placing homeless housing on Lot 2 in Marina del Rey. Consideration must be given to the proposed housing's conflict with the Los Angeles World Airports' FAA-approved Air/Sea Disaster Plan for LAX and the California Coastal Act, its regulatory program for Marina del Rey and the Coastal Commission's policies and procedures.

**Marina del Rey**  
**Lessees Association**

C/o Mr. Timothy C. Riley, Executive Director  
8537 Wakefield Avenue  
Panorama City, CA 91402  
Telephone: 818-891-0495; FAX: 818-891-1056

August 24, 2021

The Hon. Mark Ridley-Thomas, Chair  
The Hon. Kevin De Leon  
The Hon. Joe Buscaino  
The Hon. Monica Rodriguez  
The Hon. Nithya Raman  
Homelessness & Poverty Committee  
Los Angeles City Council  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Agenda Item #5, Thursday, August 26, 2021

Dear Honorable Councilmembers:

In a report dated August 10, 2021, the City Administrative Officer identified the County-owned Lot 2 at 13477 Fiji Way in unincorporated Marina del Rey, otherwise known as the Public Boat Launch Ramp, as a site under assessment for funding for potential homeless interventions consisting of tiny homes or safe camping sites.

The Marina del Rey Lessees Association, along with other key stakeholders within unincorporated Marina del Rey, are deeply concerned that a community impact study was neither included nor subsequently considered in Councilman Mike Bonin's motion to include several Westside locations for consideration in the feasibility study for homeless housing that was adopted by the Los Angeles City Council.

To date, there is no evidence that the City (or even the County of Los Angeles) has considered that the contemplated "temporary" homeless housing at the Public Boat Launch Ramp would be in conflict with LAWA's FAA-approved Air/Sea Disaster Plan for LAX and the California Coastal Act, its regulatory Program for Marina del Rey, and the Coastal Commission's policies and procedures.

The Public Boat Launch Ramp is identified as a "major evacuation site" in LAWA's FAA-approved Air/Sea Disaster Plan, which is a key component of LAX's Airport Emergency Plan.<sup>1</sup> The obvious concerns of LAWA/FAA and first

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 2 (Air/Sea Disaster Plan) - LAWA/LAX Airport Emergency Plan



responders, such as the Coast Guard and local fire and law enforcement, ought to be uppermost in mind.

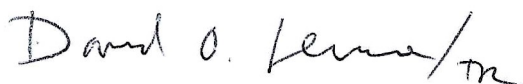
The Public Boat Launch Ramp is one of only a few locations in Los Angeles County designated as a major air disaster evacuation site. Given its close proximity to LAX's primary airliner takeoff pattern over the Pacific and the Marina's abundance of first responder personnel and equipment (i.e., Coast Guard, LA County Fire, Sheriff and Lifeguard stations are all located in the Marina and a hospital is located on the Marina's perimeter), the Public Boat Launch Ramp would undoubtedly serve as the primary emergency evacuation site in the event of a major air disaster. If the Public Boat Launch Ramp contained a small village housing the homeless, imagine the unnecessary chaos that would ensue when first responders rush to mobilize at the facility following a catastrophic air disaster. With these factors in mind, we conclude that LAWA, the FAA, the Coast Guard and LA County's Sheriff, Fire and Lifeguard management could not have been duly consulted regarding this ill-advised proposal.

The feasibility study must also include an assessment of the risk to public safety in placing housing on a major public boat launch ramp facility, where trailers, heavy machinery and watercraft vessels are operated and backed into the water. Additionally, the Public Boat Launch Ramp is located in a tsunami zone. Locating temporary homeless housing within a tsunami zone in such close proximity to the operation of heavy equipment and disaster evacuation activities is wholly inappropriate for public safety and security reasons.

Aside from its emergency disaster and evacuation uses, the Public Boat Launch Ramp's unique function of providing low-cost access for recreational boating, amongst the most highly protected user group under the California Coastal Act, has not been given appropriate consideration. It would be ill-advised to disenfranchise members of the boating public, many of whom use the Public Boat Launch Ramp as a lower-cost recreational boating facility and have no other reasonable option to gain access to the ocean for their boats. Locating housing at this site would be in conflict with long-standing Coastal Commission policies and practice.

Thank you for your consideration of vital public safety issues and the maintenance of low-cost affordable recreational boating.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David O. Levine" followed by a stylized flourish or initials.

David O. Levine, President  
Marina del Rey Lessees Association