

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Charles Porter (on behalf of the Skid Row Community Improvement Coalition)

**Date Submitted:** 09/14/2021 10:34 PM

**Council File No:** 21-0979

**Comments for Public Posting:** Dear Committee Members, Streets LA gave a presentation to the Skid Row Community Improvement Coalition (SRCIC) at our meeting on September 2, 2021. We formed a Transit Justice Working Group to get our recommendations to Streets LA to be part of the new contract now being negotiated. Our recommendations seek to address equity and safety concerns in the context of the unique circumstances, including vigilance and resilience, of the Skid Row neighborhood. One of these issues is the safety of women utilizing LAHSA shelter bus stops (in addition to regular Metro bus stops) and the need for community responsive protections. Motion 21-0979 specifically talks about the Automated Toilets in the existing contract that is about to end and this is very important to Skid Row because there are only 14 toilets in the whole City and we have 5 of them. We hope that community ongoing input/feedback, opportunities for employment, 24 hour access, and creative partnerships to celebrate community and enhance wellness (particularly in the context of a pandemic) are major priorities. We submit the following are recommendations on behalf of the SRCIC (which is composed of community advocates and neighbors and is the group that envisioned the Skid Row ReFresh Spot) to be included in any projects involving Skid Row. While the recommendations address more than toilets there is critical intersectionality that merits consideration. • Include amenities that enhance the quality of life of houseless individuals utilizing this program's services with a special emphasis on people who are unhoused. • Utilize this program to increase local hiring opportunities (input on the development, roll out, and sustainment as well as subcontracts related to the operation, upkeep and access to the amenities). Remove any barriers to hiring community members and create a process to assist individuals in securing needed documentation or training. • Include Homeless Shelter Bus Stops as part of the program • This is an equity issue as amenities have been historically targeted at high traffic areas for visibility/advertising and not necessarily driven by usage/need. Communities can request benches and bus shelters. • Amenities in Skid Row should be available daily, 24 hrs a day and include community safety provisions (lighting at night as well as staffing). • Bathrooms,

drinking water access, hand washing stations, trash cans, Technology Justice (i.e. Wi-Fi access), public amenity kiosks, and a community safety team (composed of community members with lived experience and including a bike patrol) should be included in a Skid Row plan. • A Skid Row program map should be developed to map clustering and colocation of amenities based on need and community input. This should include an overlay of automated public toilets and portable toilets. • Priority for display space must be given to local artists and PSA's supporting community health, wellness, advocacy, and safety. • An annual program report and review should be included in the contract to measure performance and responsiveness (including operation changes to address concerns). • A process must be developed to gather ongoing community feedback/input. • Contract term should be limited to no more than 10yrs with an option for extension based on performance. • A recycling program must be developed to repurpose collected items to be converted into reusable resources. • The amenities provided should not hinder sidewalk access and ADA considerations. Respectfully, Louise Mbella "Sinai" Tom Grode Charles Porter (on behalf of the Skid Row Community Improvement Coalition)

Date: September 14, 2021

Attention: Public Works Committee

Re: September 15, 2021 special meeting. Item (2)

**21-0979** Motion (De Leon - Blumenfield) relative to the Citywide public toilet program.

Dear Committee Members,

Streets LA gave a presentation to the Skid Row Community Improvement Coalition (SRCIC) at our meeting on September 2, 2021. We formed a Transit Justice Working Group to get our recommendations to Streets LA to be part of the new contract now being negotiated. Our recommendations seek to address equity and safety concerns in the context of the unique circumstances, including vigilance and resilience, of the Skid Row neighborhood. One of these issues is the safety of women utilizing LAHSA shelter bus stops (in addition to regular Metro bus stops) and the need for community responsive protections.

Motion **21-0979** specifically talks about the Automated Toilets in the existing contract that is about to end and this is very important to Skid Row because there are only 14 toilets in the whole City and we have 5 of them.

We hope that community ongoing input/feedback, opportunities for employment, 24 hour access, and creative partnerships to celebrate community and enhance wellness (particularly in the context of a pandemic) are major priorities. We submit the following are recommendations on behalf of the SRCIC (which is composed of community advocates and neighbors and is the group that envisioned the Skid Row ReFresh Spot) to be included in any projects involving Skid Row. While the recommendations address more than toilets there is critical intersectionality that merits consideration.

- Include amenities that enhance the quality of life of houseless individuals utilizing this program's services with a special emphasis on people who are unhoused.
- Utilize this program to increase local hiring opportunities (input on the development, roll out, and sustainment as well as subcontracts related to the operation, upkeep and access to the amenities). Remove any barriers to hiring community members and create a process to assist individuals in securing needed documentation or training.
- Include Homeless Shelter Bus Stops as part of the program
- This is an equity issue as amenities have been historically targeted at high traffic areas for visibility/advertising and not necessarily driven by usage/need. Communities can request benches and bus shelters.
- Amenities in Skid Row should be available daily, 24 hrs a day and include community safety provisions (lighting at night as well as staffing).
- Bathrooms, drinking water access, hand washing stations, trash cans, Technology Justice (i.e. Wi-Fi access), public amenity kiosks, and a community safety team (composed of community

members with lived experience and including a bike patrol) should be included in a Skid Row plan.

- A Skid Row program map should be developed to map clustering and colocation of amenities based on need and community input. This should include an overlay of automated public toilets and portable toilets.
- Priority for display space must be given to local artists and PSA's supporting community health, wellness, advocacy, and safety.
- An annual program report and review should be included in the contract to measure performance and responsiveness (including operation changes to address concerns).
- A process must be developed to gather ongoing community feedback/input.
- Contract term should be limited to no more than 10yrs with an option for extension based on performance.
- A recycling program must be developed to repurpose collected items to be converted into reusable resources.
- The amenities provided should not hinder sidewalk access and ADA considerations.

Respectfully,

Louise Mbella "Sinai"

Tom Grode

Charles Porter

(on behalf of the Skid Row Community Improvement Coalition)