

# IMPROVING LIVABILITY IN LOS ANGELES

CLEAN STREETS LA



CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

MARCH 2015

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## **I. OVERVIEW**

Improving cleanliness of the City is a complex public policy and management challenge and a core deliverable of Mayor Eric Garcetti's Back-To-Basics livability outcome goals and the City Council's Clean Streets LA program. In response to motions put forth by Councilmen Gil Cedillo (14-1499) and Tom LaBonge (14-1499-S1), this report outlines a recommended course of action to advance livability in the City and deliver cleaner neighborhoods to residents, businesses, and visitors.

In preparing the recommendations in this report, our office worked with the following City agencies and departments: In preparing the recommendations in this report, our Office worked with the following City agencies: Department of Public Works (specifically, Bureau of Sanitation, Board of Public Works, Office of Community Beautification and Bureau of Street Services), Department of General Services, Offices of the Mayor, City Attorney, Chief Legislative Analyst, and City Clerk. Additional information was provided by City Council offices, Los Angeles Police Department and Department of Building and Safety. Independent interviews and site visits with local agencies, neighborhood councils, and civic partners were conducted. The New York City Mayor's Management Team and the Las Vegas Downtown Project hosted our office's Fuse Corps executive fellow. Published best-practices research and interviews with cited references provided additional context for this report's recommendations.

Los Angeles differs from its domestic and international peers, as a city against the grain, historically depicted as a place of less urbanism and population density. While this may have been true when the City's quality of life systems were developed, today it has the nation's largest infrastructure of streets and sidewalks.<sup>1</sup> The City has the most densely populated<sup>2</sup>—and most walkable<sup>3</sup>—neighborhoods in the nation's most populated county. The City follows only New York and San Francisco as the U.S. cities with the most people living at the highest density levels,<sup>4</sup> with more than 90,000 residents per square mile in the City's most dense census tracts.<sup>5</sup> Over the last 15 years, multi-unit buildings have become the City's dominant housing stock and comprise 85% of recent unit growth.<sup>6</sup> The City now has the nation's highest percentage of residents living in apartments<sup>7</sup> and the highest number of crowded per-unit homes.<sup>8</sup>

The City joins New York as the two United States cities where the concentration of businesses is ten times the national average of 6.8 businesses per square mile.<sup>9</sup> Investments in transit have given the City the second largest public transportation ridership in the nation<sup>10</sup> and with the passage of the California Complete Streets Act (AB 1358) in 2008,<sup>11</sup> future development points to a much greater pedestrian and transit oriented future than collective services were currently designed to support. The City's population migration patterns have also changed. The out-migration of young adults has declined by 80%<sup>12</sup> since the recession and the concentration of young professionals living in the City's core neighborhoods has doubled since 2000.<sup>13</sup> These are significant changes for Los Angeles and advance the context of how the City must continue to address urbanism and livability—both absolutely critical to its continued global competitiveness—going forward.

The City's leadership and the vibrant trends happening among its industry sectors have given residents, investors, reporters, urbanists, philanthropic leaders (and critics) much evidence to be optimistic about the City. Neighborhoods are experiencing record investment and pedestrian accessibility,<sup>14</sup> and rightfully, there's a renewed focus to combat blight and visible disorder that hinder equitable growth, dampen civic pride, and counter perceptions of safety. This momentum to strengthen the City's urban assets and leverage its physical infrastructure to build stronger communities has powered efforts to create Complete<sup>15</sup> and People Streets,<sup>16</sup> safe and walkable communities, the LADOT Great Streets Strategic Plan,<sup>17</sup> and Mayor Garcetti's executive directive establishing the Great Streets program.<sup>18</sup>

The attractiveness of the City's neighborhoods is a signal of the health of the City and how it relates to its stakeholders. Embedded in this report's desired outcomes are recommendations to ensure the City's public and private spaces are maintained and governed, factors that contribute to the proliferation of illegal dumping and bulky items on the City's streets, and opportunities to partner with the public to support cleaner and economically viable communities. Our office implemented the innovation delivery model<sup>19</sup>—which combines idea generation techniques with a structured, data-driven method for delivering results—to achieve a broad consensus for delivering a more livable City.



## **II. DESIRED OUTCOMES**

The Recommendations are strategies based on the best practices in municipal management, appropriately adapted for the City's current initiatives and infrastructure, financing tools, variation of needs, capacity to achieve measurable outcomes, and acknowledgement of the *Jones*<sup>20</sup> and *Lavan*<sup>21</sup> injunctions. The 10 recommendations in this report will help the City deliver two desired outcomes: the elimination of blight and uncleanliness across all Los Angeles communities and fostering greater collaboration with the public to improve livability across the City.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Mayor and City Council:

1. **Develop a Street Conditions Observation Unit (SCOUT) program**, instructing the Board of Public Works to expand the scope of the Office of Community Beautification's community partners to proactively identify and report quality of life conditions to the City's 311-system.
2. **Develop the City's cleanliness rating index.** Instruct the Board of Public Works and the Office of Community Beautification to regularly measure the cleanliness of the City's streets, neighborhoods, and districts. Distribution of resources should be informed by this measurement tool and should be outcome driven.
3. **Enhance the City trash receptacle program.** Instruct the Bureau of Sanitation to develop an enhanced program and work with the City Administrative Office to identify funding.
4. **Develop improvements in bulky item pick-up and illegal dumping clean-ups** instructing the Bureau of Sanitation and City Administrative Office to conduct needs assessment and propose financing options.
5. **Develop a business improvement district administrative cost sharing program**, instructing the Office of the Clerk, Board of Public Works, and City Administrative

Office optimize essential BID services for neighborhood commercial corridors and smaller-BIDs. **Develop formal city services agreement with existing BIDs**, instructing the Office of the Clerk, Board of Public Works, and City Administrative Office clarify City-provided services alongside BID value-added services. **Develop and market the BID program's value-added benefits** to City's businesses and commercial properties, instructing the Office of the Clerk to develop a formal marketing effort for the City's BID program.

6. **Develop and launch a comprehensive clean and pride pilot campaign that targets the end-users of the City's services and programs.** Use pilot as model for a citywide localized clean and pride campaign to be launched at a later date.
7. **Develop and implement an effective system of coordinated enforcement for the City's quality of life laws.** Instruct the Board of Public Works and Bureau of Street Services—in partnership with the City Attorney's Office, City Administrative Office, Bureau of Sanitation, and Department of Building and Safety—to ensure the private properties fully comply with existing ordinances.
8. **Study best practices adopted across the country to successfully manage supply of vacant and underdeveloped land parcels**—more than 22,000— instructing the City Administrative Office, with the assistance of the Economic and Workforce Development Department, and appropriate departments to explore immediate and long-term opportunities.
9. **Modernize the City's street sweeping program.** Instruct the Board of Public Works, Bureau of Street Services, and Bureau of Sanitation to hire a consultant to assist in developing a new program that executes the City's *Water Quality Compliance Master Plan* urban runoff and trash control goals.
10. **Instruct the Board of Public Works** to oversee, manage, and coordinate implementation of recommendations and short-term and long-term directives.

### III. PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 1. PROACTIVE SCOUTS

- **Recommendation:** Develop a Street Conditions Observation Unit (SCOUT) program, instructing the Board of Public Works to expand the scope of the Office of Community Beautification's community partners to proactively identify and report quality of life conditions to the City's 311- system.
- **Opportunity/Benefit:** Generally, the City's residents and businesses report only the quality of life conditions that have a direct impact on them. The Scouts would capture unreported quality of life conditions and liabilities, and ensure the City's agencies can properly respond.

#### CONTEXT:

With millions of eyes on the streets, the City followed the lead of other cities, turning to 311 systems as the central reporting of quality of life conditions. The visual image of the City's unclean streets is an accumulation of two issues: a backlog of reported issues and unreported conditions. Angelenos regularly report abandoned bulky items, illegal dumping, broken sidewalks, and other conditions that require the City's attention. The City's agencies share the 311 system's inquiry costs, allocating charge-backs based on their share of complaints received and processed. Despite its significance, 311 is not a catch-all for management of quality of life conditions. Even with 311, the City's public spaces, alleyways, commercial corridors, elevated highways, and underdeveloped lots continue to collect piles of litter, bulky items, and illegal dumping. In general, if these problems aren't reported by residents, they are not tracked or addressed.

The City's current systems—which operate absent of an institutionalized proactive identification program—enable areas to accumulate blight. This can contribute to the perception that areas of the City lack proper services and governance. The regularity of visual disorder has become a fixture in many neighborhoods and contributes to a culture—consistent with research on neighborhood blight and disorder—that enables additional unwanted activity in the City. Capturing unreported quality of life conditions would contribute a significant boost to addressing the quality of life conditions impacting the City.

Residents generally report only the conditions that directly affect them.<sup>22</sup> To resolve this challenge, other cities have adopted programs that proactively identify and respond to quality of life conditions not reported. The City has a successful program currently implementing this approach to problem-solving. The Office of Community Beautification uses community partners to proactively scout the entire City and identify graffiti tagging. The scouts report this condition to the City for data collection and removal. Roughly 75% of the City's identified and reported graffiti is identified by Scouts.

Proactive government with accessible citizen reporting improves overall performance outcomes. On a regular basis, the City has existing infrastructure to capture all unreported conditions and tracks completion of reported work orders, providing the 311-system with a quality assurance control. The City should expand the OCB partner program's scope to identify additional quality of life conditions and report these findings to the City's 311-system. A more complete reporting of all issues would provide a solid benchmark and needs assessments for the City to ensure appropriate service delivery systems are in place to meet the City's customer service goals and evolving baseline of needs. City Council offices, non-profits, and neighborhood organizations operate a number of proactive identification "scout-like" programs, which assist in identifying and reporting bulky items, illegal dumping, and other conditions.

This recommendation aims to not just formalize these efforts and optimize the City's discretionary investments in this core municipal service, but gather adequate, meaningful data on the City's quality of life conditions. Analysis of data and reporting trends will aid the City's departments to optimize response and reduce the conditions visible across the City. Institutionalizing an efficient proactive program for addressing the quality of life conditions is consistent with Mayor Garcetti's vision for a better run city and provides support to deliver and respond to the needs of the City's neighborhoods.

#### EXECUTION PLAN:

The successful graffiti removal program in the Office of Community Beautification provides a framework for a more robust street conditions observation inspection program. To immediately address the City's needs, it is recommended that the Mayor and City Council instruct the expansion of OCB's scope:

— **Current Street Conditions Observations Reporting by OCB Partners::**

- Graffiti

— **Expanded Street Conditions Observations:**

- Bulky Item
- Illegal Dumping
- Broken Sidewalk
- Pothole
- Emergency Forestry Condition
- Excessive Litter / Unsanitary Condition
- Blighted Vacant Land Parcel
- Illegal Signs / Others

— **Existing Partners:**

- Central City Action Committee: Central LA
- Coalition For Responsible Community Development: South LA
- Gang Alternatives Program: East LA, Harbor, South LA
- Graffiti Control Systems: Specialty Graffiti Removal Services
- Graffiti Control Systems: Strike Force Crews
- Hollywood Beautification Team: Central LA
- Koreatown Youth and Community Center: Central LA
- Los Angeles Conservation Corps: South LA and Central LA
- New Directors For Youth: East Valley
- Northeast Graffiti Busters: East Valley and Northeast LA
- Pacific Graffiti Solutions: West LA
- Sun Valley Area Chamber of Commerce: East Valley
- Sylmar Graffiti Busters: East Valley
- West Valley Alliance: West Valley

**REQUESTED RESOURCES:**

- *Staff Time:* Board of Public Works, Office of Community Beatification, City Administrative Office, Office of the Mayor
- *Budget Impact:* Funding to expand observation services of OCB community partners to include quality of life conditions.

— *Funding:*

- Use 311's existing cost-allocation funding infrastructure. Scouts will report unreported conditions through existing City systems.
- Expansion of existing OCB contract with community partners, executing daily observation and reporting functions.

METRICS AND OUTCOME MEASURE(S):

- 311-System Usage
- Percentage of Acceptably Clean Rated Streets
- Quality of Life Conditions Reporting

PRIMARY ENTITIES: Board of Public Works, Office of Community Beautification

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS: Office of the Mayor, City Administrative Office, City Council Offices, and Information Technology Agency

**2. CLEANLINESS RATING INDEX**

- **Recommendation:** Develop the City's cleanliness rating index. Instruct the Board of Public Works and the Office of Community Beautification to regularly measure the cleanliness of the City's streets, neighborhoods, and districts. Distribution of resources should be informed by this measurement tool and should be outcome driven.
- **Opportunity/Benefit:** Measuring and rating cleanliness in the City would better inform decisions about programs, funding, and resource allocation. The City could baseline service needs, benchmark successes, while assessing the impact of a broad variation of population behaviors on the work of departments and agencies.

CONTEXT:

The City is an active affiliate of Keep America Beautiful (KAB), utilizing its programs and best practices to improve cleanliness of the City's neighborhoods.<sup>23</sup> KAB and its affiliate cities have moved beyond sanitation and clean-up transactions as a measure of street cleanliness, adopting a quantitative and data-driven approach to understanding how to best attaining clean neighborhoods. This data-driven, photometric index, allows cities to rate the



cleanliness of individual neighborhoods with analysts tracking the degree of surface litter, debris, and trash by comparing actual street conditions to simple, photographic standards.<sup>24</sup>

Established in 1974—and refined over time by academic, environmental, and policy experts—this index pre-dates COMSTAT policing<sup>25</sup> as a data-driven public management tool institutionalized in cities. As a requirement of the City's KAB affiliation, the Office of Community Beautification conducted a volunteer-led rating in 2008, providing the City's initial cleanliness ratings to KAB.

In the largest cities that have adopted KAB's data-driven approach, the cleanliness index is much more than a volunteer-effort. San Francisco, Washington DC, New York, Philadelphia, and Miami Beach use the framework and rating system as performance management programs to regularly measure the cleanliness of their streets, neighborhoods, and districts. The Cleanliness Rating Index, in concept, is the City Council's vision for SANSTAT, a data driven program that will help the City better allocate resources.<sup>26</sup>

New York's cleanliness rating index, "Scorecard," sends analysts to survey its neighborhood councils, business improvement districts, and all five boroughs each month. The analysts take a random sampling of each designated district's streets—divvying the sampled street into a series of block faces—and average the 'score' on a scale from 1.0 (cleanest) to 3.0 (filthiest). New York's Scorecard classifies only streets rated at 1.5 or higher as acceptably clean streets.<sup>27</sup> The Scorecard data ratings are shared with the impacted agencies to evaluate changes, when identified.

This system enables a real-time, transparency-driven assessment of the cleanliness of each neighborhood, public spaces, and pedestrian corridors and offers the opportunity to align and adapt resources—working directly with stakeholders—to improve the cleanliness ratings and track success. When communities fall below acceptable ratings, New York identifies public or private initiatives that can improve them. These initiatives range from greater trash receptacle placement to reduce street litter, business improvement district development to provide services above and beyond existing baselines, or a localized public campaign to improve resident-driven actions.



Adopting a rating index enables a city to gauge need assessments, support or deny requests for additional resources to achieve specific outcomes, and inform where increased concentration of services will have the greatest impact. The Scorecard index in New York has tracked street cleanliness rising from 53% acceptable rating in 1980—as the city teetered on bankruptcy—to 95% in 2013,<sup>28</sup> significantly improving quality of life and supporting New York’s well-known livability turnaround. Academic research comparing citizen surveys with New York’s rating found consistent correlation between New York’s index and citizen ratings of cleanliness in their neighborhoods. The index also proved to be a much stronger predictor of citizen ratings than a community’s demographic factors, trust in government, or contextual effect.<sup>29</sup> The cleanliness data set served as a metric in a widely circulated NYC Neighborhood Livability Index score, developed by Nate Silver and *New York* magazine.<sup>30</sup>

In San Francisco, the 2003 voter-approved Proposition C required the establishment of performance standards and the regular audit of street and sidewalk cleanliness.<sup>31</sup> The San Francisco Controller’s Office and Department of Public Works conduct biannual evaluations of five city service areas: street cleanliness, sidewalk cleanliness, graffiti, trash receptacles, and trees and landscaping. The San Francisco street and sidewalk cleanliness rating is consistent with both KAB’s cleanliness rating index and New York’s Scorecard, rating from 1.0 (very clean) to 3.0 (dirty).

Mapping of the City of Philadelphia’s sanitation districts highlights a similar success of institutionalizing the KAB index over the last eight years.<sup>32 33</sup> Despite the impact of the economic recession on its municipal budget and Philadelphia having the nation’s highest percentage of its residents in poverty, dramatic improvements in cleanliness have been measured by establishing a rating index. Miami Beach improved the overall cleanliness of its streets by 29% over the last decade, with independent evaluations attributing the rating index for contributing to the rise in community satisfaction on neighborhood cleanliness.<sup>34 35</sup> A cleanliness index has also been adopted as a regular performance management system in Washington DC, Kansas City, and in KAB affiliate cities across the country.<sup>36 37</sup>

Similar to the success of LAPD’s adoption of COMSTAT, two effective models of data-driven programs within the Board of Public Works highlight the capacity of its reporting

agencies to deliver quantitative program management. First, the Bureau of Street Services' pavement management program rates the pavement quality of the City's street. This program ensures the City selects maintenance and rehabilitation needs—and determines the optimal timing of repair—through predictive modeling of future road conditions. A lesser celebrated success is the City's graffiti removal rating—another KAB affiliate program. The Office of Community Beautification deploys analysts to "rate" the City's streets and 15 graffiti zones, measuring the success and performance of the City's efforts. This targeted approach and performance evaluation system have contributed to a drastic reduction of visibility of graffiti in the City.

#### EXECUTION PLAN:

The Board of Public Works and Office of Community Beautification are best positioned to coordinate, deliver, and monitor the City's system of cleanliness standards and rating index and regularly measure the cleanliness of the City's streets, neighborhoods, and districts. The City would adopt the KAB ratings, using the existing 15 graffiti zones as the framework to map cleanliness in the City. Zones would be further broken into evaluation areas where data could be extracted for the City's council districts, neighborhood councils, and business improvement districts. The City should adopt the rating, consistent with New York and San Francisco: 1.0 (Very Clean); Less than 2.0 (Acceptably Clean); and 3.0 = Very Dirty/Illegal Dumping. Only streets rated less than 2.0 would be acceptable.

The OCB would employ a team of analysts, working with impacted agencies, to provide a benchmark of how clean the City is and allow data to clearly define the highest need areas. The Cleanliness Rating index would support the vision and data collection for SANSTATS and the City's overall livability goals, while informing where public and private resources can be effectively deployed. KAB recommends its affiliates conduct, at minimal, an annual assessment to measure the success of clean-up programs.<sup>38</sup> The report recommends the City provide quarterly measures.

#### REQUESTED RESOURCES:

- *Staff Time.* Board of Public Works, Office of Community Beautification, City Administrative Office, and Office of the Mayor

- *Budget Impact.* Office of Community Beautification employ a team of analysts to “rate” the City’s neighborhoods.
- *Leadership.* Public Works would assign a manager to oversee evaluation and inspection process and publish the city’s first formal cleanliness rating.
- *Sources of Funding.* Funding the program could be shared among three allocated costs—justified as a performance-management expense:
  - Solid Waste Resource Fund: *covers all transactional and administrative costs directly related to residential solid waste removal in the city*
  - Multi-Family Bulky Item Fund: *covers the costs of bulky item pick-up among all residential multi-family units*
  - General Fund: *commercial corridors and public spaces maintenance*

**METRICS:**

- *Desired Baseline:* Cleanliness Rating of City Council Districts, Neighborhoods, Neighborhood Councils, and Business Improvement Districts
- *Success Metrics:* Percentage of Acceptably Clean Streets in the City; Number of Illegal Dumping Complaints

**PRIMARY ENTITIES:** Board of Public Work, Office of Community Beautification

**ADDITIONAL PARTNERS:** Office of the Mayor, City Administrative Office, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, Office of the City Clerk-Neighborhood and Business Improvement District Division

**3. TRASH RECEPTACLE PROGRAM**

- **Recommendation:** Enhance the City trash receptacle program. Instruct the Bureau of Sanitation to develop an enhanced program and work with the City Administrative Office to identify funding.
- **Opportunity/Benefit:** With a growing pedestrian population and thriving transit ridership, an expansion of the City’s public sidewalk trash receptacle program would increase the City’s capture of street litter and solid waste, while supporting the City’s 2035 mobility goals.<sup>39</sup>

**CONTEXT:**

The City's street litter is driven largely by pedestrian activity, with variation dependent on the neighborhood's density, school safe-routes, commercial corridors and business make-up, and transit routes. The City manages 1,000 public trash receptacles on its 6,500 miles of sidewalks. This is significantly less than our peer cities: 25,000 public receptacles in New York City,<sup>40</sup> 4,800 in Washington DC,<sup>41</sup> and 3,500 in San Francisco.<sup>42</sup>

Providing sufficient trash and recycling receptacles are an important sidewalk infrastructure to increase the City's capture of sidewalk litter and support the City's urban runoff reduction goals. The Bureau of Sanitation published the *High Trash Generating and Control Measures*<sup>43</sup> report in 2002, following the designation of trash as a major pollutant in the City's urban runoff. The report identified the seven communities where the greatest volume of trash is produced, consequently having the highest impact on the City's stormwater catch basins. Five of these high trash producing communities—Westlake, Southeast L.A., South L.A., Wilshire, and West Adams—are mostly residential and encompass dense, walkable parts of the City.

An expansion of the City's public sidewalk trash receptacle program would increase the City's capture of street litter and solid waste and support recommendations outlined in the *High Trash Generating* report and presented as an outcome goal in the Department of Planning's Mobility Plan 2035 report, released this year.<sup>44</sup> Trash receptacles reduce the amount of street litter accumulation by reducing the observable present litter, which in return reduces street litter.<sup>45</sup> Excessive litter accumulation at the City's transit bus stops have been shown to be a significant factor in increasing the likelihood of crime.<sup>46</sup> Pilot studies conducted by the Bureau of Sanitation found that trash receptacles—particularly in areas of mixed commercial and residential land use—are highly beneficial in reducing the trash accumulation in the City's catch basins.<sup>47</sup>

Keep America Beautiful's research on litter behavior in cities found that 40 percent of people will occasionally litter, despite receiving messages encouraging them against it. As a result, street cleaning must be equally optimized as part of the long-term solution. The City spends roughly \$7.8 million on beach and waterway clean-up and \$3.6 million for storm drain cleaning and maintenance each year.<sup>48</sup> Improving both receptacle presence and

street sweeping optimization could contribute cost savings on cleanup expenses while delivering cleaner neighborhoods.

EXECUTION PLAN:

With authorization, the Board of Public Works and the Bureau of Sanitation would expand the City's trash receptacle program, coordinating solid waste removal across the City's sidewalks and public spaces. The City's current receptacles were recently mapped and aligned to the existing sanitation routes for optimal pick-up. This mapping found a much lower number of receptacles than previously reported. The City has limited census of pedestrian traffic data, thus, receptacle expansion will derive from variables that largely influence walkability. The Cleanliness Rating Index will help identify changes in pedestrian traffic that may point to adjusting receptacles to reduce the presence of litter.

The Bureau of Sanitation submitted a formal request to expand from its current stock to 3,000 receptacles; a request supported by this report and echoes the recommendation presented in the *High Trash Generating* report and the Department of Planning's *Mobility Plan 2035*.<sup>49</sup>

This report also recommends the Bureau of Sanitation map and account for privately-managed receptacles and obtain oversight of the private contractors who service the City's bus stop receptacles. The City's 311 and call centers are among those contacted when stakeholders identify overflowing trash receptacles that become public health hazards or public safety concerns.

The Bureau of Sanitation holds ultimate accountability for ensuring the City achieve its stormwater urban runoff goals, thus coordinating of the variables that impact these results, are critical to optimizing success. The consolidation of these efforts would offer the best solution for the City and simplify the point of contact for cleanliness, security, and general public contact.

The Bureau of Sanitation would identify the highest priorities areas for trash receptacles—gathering pedestrian and anecdotal data from agencies, existing research, and council offices—and report the recommended deployment. The Bureau of Sanitation



could extend local partnership opportunities to associations, local merchant groups, and chambers, to help the City reduce litter on the busiest corridors and support Zero Waste goals. As reflected in receptacle growth within the City's business improvement districts, the City's continued pedestrian traffic growth and changing make-up of businesses will create a permanent need for flexibility and resources to expand.

REQUESTED RESOURCES:

- *Staff Time:* Bureau of Sanitation
- *Budget Impact:* Costs for trash receptacles and servicing
- *Sources of Funding:*
  - *Street Furniture Revenue Fund: Special appropriations by Council office to purchase additional receptacles*
  - *General Fund Allocation: Covers the expanded pick-up services of trash across the city's commercial corridors*
  - *Solid Waste Resource Fund: Covers the expanded percentage share of residential and multi-family unit streets.*

METRICS:

- Sanitation Tonnage Pick-Up
- Stormwater Pollution Levels and Costs
- Percentage of Acceptably Clean Rated Streets

PRIMARY ENTITY: Bureau of Sanitation

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS: Board of Public Works, Bureau of Street Services, Los Angeles Department of Transportation, City Council Districts

#### **4. FUNDING CLEAN-UPS PROGRAMS**

- **Recommendation:** Develop improvements in bulky item pick-up and illegal dumping clean-ups instructing the Bureau of Sanitation and City Administrative Office to conduct needs assessment and propose financing options.
- **Opportunity/Benefit:**
  - Maximize financing tools for clean street services, including the Multi-Family Bulky Item program and residential alley clean-up.
  - Connecting performance metrics, customer service expectations, and financing tools.

#### **CONTEXT:**

As a core principle, financing of public services drives the available resources to deliver them. California Proposition 218 restricts the use of City-levied fees for property-related services to the cost of providing that service.<sup>50</sup> By law, the way programs must be structured and services delivered, essentially divvies the City's urban neighborhoods into collections of independent private properties. Historical interpretation has left the maintenance and cleaning the City's public sidewalks, streets, and alleys without special-allocated funding. Ensuring the bulky item and clean-up programs are cost-recovery—and the scopes of service delivery operate under an appropriate "urban" interpretation—would improve the cleanliness of the City's streets and the fundamental fluidity of the City's patchwork of neighborhoods.

#### ***Funding the Bulky Item Program:***

The City created the Bulky Item Pick-Up Program in 2007 to manage and oversee the removal of furniture, appliances, and oversized items off residential streets and sidewalks. Currently, residents can contact the City's 311-center or call centers and schedule pick-up of bulky items from the Bureau of Sanitation. This service is financed by the residents in the City's apartment buildings, who contribute \$1.28 each month (per unit) to the Multi-Family Bulky Item Fund. The City has 880,581 multifamily units.<sup>51</sup> As outlined in the 2007 municipal ordinance, which established the Multi-Family Bulky Item Fund, the City can adjust the monthly assessment fee to ensure cost-recovery of the service.<sup>52</sup>



The fund covers the transactional and administrative costs related to removing bulky items directly in front of the City's multi-family unit buildings (*"attributed bulky items"*). This includes apartments managed by both private waste-management companies and serviced by the City. For the City's single-family homes—which make up 78% of the City's housing land space—bulky item pick-up is included in their monthly solid waste bill of \$36.32.

For bulky items that appear on the public right of way (ex: sidewalk or alley along rate paying properties), the City currently classifies them as an illegally dumped item. The City receives roughly 390,000 annual complaints and notices about abandoned (*"unattributed"*) items on the streets.<sup>53</sup> This is more than 19 times the number received by San Francisco.<sup>54</sup> San Francisco operates a similar call-to-schedule approach to bulky item pick-up and its 17,000 unattributed complaints were more than twice those of Washington D.C., Seattle, San Jose, and Chicago.<sup>55</sup> Although the City is unique in having a special fund established for bulky item pick-up, unattributed items are currently not charged to the Multi-Family Bulky Item Fund or Solid Waste Resource Fund. They are charged back to the City's General Fund and special allocations for clean-ups.

This clean-up service has a special benefit to the City's rate payers because their private properties are blighted by the visible presence of both attributed and unattributed items. Clean-ups on public-right of ways adjacent to the city's rate-payers can be covered by the City's solid waste and bulky item funds. This is consistent with other County and California municipalities—governed by the same laws—and fulfills one of the purposes of the program. The Bureau of Sanitation's SANSTATS program will provide data behind the unknowns of the City's bulky item volume and this data will help inform allocation of resources. Councilman Gil Cedillo (CD1) piloted a bulky item scheduled pick-up within resident's homes and units, as an expanded service option. Exploration of a city-wide service should be incorporated into this city-wide analysis.

***Funding Alley Cleaning and Residential Illegal Dumping:***

The City has the nation's second largest alley network; 914 miles mostly concentrated in the south and southeastern parts of the City. Residential alleys in the City have been particularly vulnerable for illegal dumping and criminal activity. Decades of efforts have had limited impact in curbing one of the City's greatest livability challenges. The Bureau of

Sanitation recently assumed the responsibility to manage the City's illegal dumping and alley clean-ups, with additional funding provided by Mayor Garcetti and the Clean Streets LA program. Although the full extent of litter and dumping in the City has not been benchmarked, the City has spent as much as \$12 million annually in general funds to remove waste illegally dumped in the City.<sup>56</sup>

— 914 Miles of Alleys in the City of Los Angeles<sup>57</sup>

- 34% - Single-Family Residential
- 31% - Multi-Family Residential
- 20% - Commercial
- 9% - Other Usage

A University of Southern California study, which explored alternative uses for the vulnerable urban alleys, conducted a random sampling of 300 in 2008. The University found that 38% of alleys in South L.A.<sup>58</sup> contained significant litter and 15% contained visible risky litter (condoms, drug paraphernalia, and beer caps). In the last fiscal year, Councilman (CD1) Gil Cedillo's Keep It Clean initiative cleaned 286 alleys, lots, and streets in Council District 1,<sup>59</sup> serving as the pilot for the expanded efforts for the Bureau of Sanitation's Clean Streets LA \$5 million program. This new program is helping clean-up more than 400 reported, backlogged neighborhood sites of illegal dumping reported in the last calendar year.

EXECUTION PLAN:

The municipal codes enable reexamination of the City's clean streets financing tools that fund the Multi-Family Bulky Item program and solid waste removal services. This report recommends the City move forward, instructing the Bureau of Sanitation and City Administrative Office to ensure cost-recovery programs meet customer service expectations, and are authorized to deliver complete, clean residential neighborhoods.

**Funding Clean-Up:**

- **With the desired outcome of bulky-item free residential streets throughout the City's multi-family and mixed used communities**, extend program coverage of the City's Multi-Family Bulky Item program to cover attributed and unattributed bulky

item pick-ups on the City's multifamily residential and mixed-use streets. All multi-unit and mixed-use apartment residents are rate-payers into the City's Multi-Family Bulky Item program. Program coverage would include:

- Multi-Family Building Adjacent Sidewalk Bulky Item Pick-Ups
- Multi-Family Building Adjacent Alleyways Clean-Ups
- Multi-Family Building Vacant Lot Adjacent Bulky Item Pick-Ups
- Multi-Family Building Public Right of Way Adjacent Pick-Up
- Mixed-Use/Rate Payer Building Adjacent Sidewalk Bulky Item Pick-Ups
- Mixed-Use/Rate Payer Building Adjacent Alleyways Clean-Ups
- Mixed-Use/Rate Payer Building Vacant Lot Adjacent Bulky Item Pick-Ups
- Mixed-Use/Rate Payer Building Public Right of Way Adjacent Pick-Up

- **To reduce the backlog and clean-up of the City's residential trash filled alleys**, extend the Solid Waste Resource program—which covers all costs directly related to residential solid waste removal in the City—to cover attributed and unattributed bulky item and solid waste pick-ups on the City's single-family residential streets and alleys. Program coverage would include:

- Single-Family Residential Sidewalk Trash Receptacles
- Single-Family Residential Alleyway Clean-Ups
- Single-Family Residential Vacant Lot Adjacent Clean-Ups
- Single-Family Residential Public Right of Way Adjacent Pick-Up

- **For illegal dumping in commercial areas, near schools, and on public properties**, the City should utilize allocated general funds to cover those costs, but work directly with property owners and enforcement agencies to curtail the dumping. Repurposing alleys should be prioritized for repeat illegal dumping locations—explored on a case-by-case, community basis. Long-term solutions, including signage that not just forbids, but recommends alternative disposal options for problem alleys that can't be repurposed.

Expanding the programs to cover unattributed solid waste removal and bulky item pick-up would fulfill one of the core goals of the special allocations and optimize the limited General Fund resources needed to cover public right-of-ways that are not adjacent to the City's rate-paying residents. Program coverage would include:

- Non-Rate Payer Adjacent Sidewalk Trash Receptacles
- Non-Rate Payer Adjacent Alleyway Clean-Ups
- Non-Rate Payer Adjacent Vacant Lot Clean-Ups
- Non-Rate Payer Adjacent Public Right of Way Clean-Ups
- Illegal Dumping Prevention Efforts (Post-Clean Up Alley Beautification)

REQUESTED RESOURCES:

- *Staff Time:* Bureau of Sanitation, City Administrative Office
- *Budget Impact:* To Be Determined
- *Sources of Funding:*
  - Solid Waste Resource Fund: *covers all transactional and administrative costs directly related to residential solid waste removal in the city*
  - Multi-Family Bulky Item Fund: *covers the costs of bulky item pick-up among all residential multi-family units*
  - General Fund Special Allocation: *commercial corridors and public spaces maintenance*

METRICS: Cleanliness Ratings for Neighborhoods, Sanitation Tonnage Pick-Up

PRIMARY ENTITIES: Bureau of Sanitation; City Administrative Office

## **5. SUPPORT BID DEVELOPMENT**

— **Recommendations:**

- **Develop a business improvement district administrative cost sharing program**, instructing the Office of the Clerk, Board of Public Works, and City Administrative Office optimize essential BID services for the neighborhood commercial corridors and smaller-BIDs.
- **Develop formal city services agreement with existing BIDs**, instructing the Office of the Clerk, Board of Public Works, and City Administrative Office clarify City-provided services alongside BID value-added services.
- **Develop and market the BID program's value-added benefits** to City's businesses and commercial properties, instructing the Office of the Clerk to develop a formal marketing effort for the City's Business Improvement District Program.

- **Opportunity/Benefit:** Support and encouragement of BID development efforts and strengthening partnerships with existing BIDs will increase the number of BIDs and improve their impact toward the City's economic goals.

### **CONTEXT:**

With the elimination of the Community Redevelopment Agencies, California cities lost their traditional economic development entities. The CRA's core mission focused on invigorating blighted communities, but behind the scenes, the agency delivered quality of life supplemental services to support the City's neighborhoods—such as trash pick-up, graffiti mitigation, and bulky item removal. While the City's leadership develops the next chapter of community redevelopment, the cross-investing in economic development and quality of life services has continued through private entities, such as merchant associations, chambers of commerce, and community development corporations, and most extensively, business improvement districts.

Since 1997, 40 Business improvement districts (BIDs) have been established in the City. These self-tax-assessment districts are organized entities to fund quality of life and maintenance services for their impacted commercial properties. This year, BIDs will spend



more than \$11.5 million on cleanliness and public safety—removing more than 9,000 tons of public sidewalk trash, sweeping the city's streets, fixing sidewalks, and trimming thousands of trees. Across the country, BIDs have helped transform blighted areas into vibrant commercial and entrepreneurial ecosystems. In most cities, including the Los Angeles County cities, vibrant and walkable commercial corridors generally have a BID partner. The City's BID program follows just New York (70 BIDs)<sup>60</sup> and Chicago (53 BIDs)<sup>61</sup> as one of the largest BID program in the country. San Diego has 18 BIDs with more than 11,000 small businesses participating in self-assessment districts.<sup>62</sup> City governments in New York, Chicago, San Diego, and San Francisco contribute financial resources that support administrative, economic development, and blight reduction for their BID partner organizations.

BIDs have not only been instrumental in redeveloping the City's urban neighborhoods, but they've increased accessibility to destination neighborhoods across the City. Their success contributes to the City's economic and general fund growth. Clean and safe programs have contributed to a decrease crime within BID boundaries—without pushing crime into surrounding neighborhoods.<sup>63</sup> Despite the program's success, the City has lost three BIDs since the program was established. Concerns over the necessity of property assessments—in addition to the City's existing taxes—have led to a series of legal challenges against the City and the BID program. The City pays assessment fees, as a property owner within 31 of the districts, but also contributes \$348,188 for general benefits to 13 BIDs.

#### EXECUTION PLAN:

To continue to grow the BID program—and further strengthen the partnerships with the existing BIDs—this report recommends making improvements to the City's program, including:

##### ***Growing the BID program:***

- **Collaboration to develop a formal BID marketing program**, instructing the Office of the City Clerk—in sync with the City's principal economic marketing—to target the City's commercial and small business community, local chamber and

merchant associations. The City has the nation's second largest concentration of businesses and an opportunity exists to encourage and promote the development of BIDs.<sup>64</sup>

- **Develop a business improvement district administrative cost sharing program**, instructing the Office of the Clerk, Board of Public Works, and City Administrative Office to optimize essential BID services for the neighborhood commercial corridors and smaller-BIDs. The City's smaller property-based BIDs can spend more than half of assessment dollars on administrative overhead costs.
- **Consider discretionary or grant funding for grassroots organizing for commercial corridors to commence the BID formation process.** The BID formation requires a multi-year commitment, and resources to identify, petition, and organizing of property owners. This is a prerequisite to prospective-BIDs to secure support to fund the management engineer's report needed for BID approval. The City currently matches half of the estimated \$80,000 cost for the management report.

***Sustaining BID involvement:***

- **Develop formal city services agreement with existing BIDs.** To alleviate expressed concerns of the City's benchmark of services declining after BID formation, instructing the Office of the Clerk, Board of Public Works, and City Administrative Office to clarify City-provided services alongside BID value-added services. San Francisco's Union Square BID Management Plan<sup>65</sup> includes a model of this agreement. This could also increase the resource allocation BIDs can dedicate to improvement efforts, without duplicating city services. For example, the Historic Core BID removed over 4,800 residential bulky items in 2013—although its residents pay the City's multifamily bulky item fee.<sup>66</sup>
- **As part of the City's long-term infrastructural strategic plans, develop an indemnification process for BIDs seeking to fast-track public works projects.** Requesting the Office of the Clerk, Board of Public Works, City Administrative Office collaborate with the City Attorney's Office to develop a program for BIDs to expedite currently backlogged infrastructural problems, without taking on the City's municipal risk. The completed work would undergo



inspection and certification by the City and prevent further challenges to the BID program.

REQUESTED RESOURCES:

- *Staff Time:* Office of City Clerk, Economic and Workforce Development Department, City Administrative Office, Office of the City Attorney, Chief Legislative Office
- *Budget Impact:* Funding to develop administrative cost program; marketing of City's overall tax-assessment programs.
- *Funding Sources:*
  - Business Improvement Trust Fund: *To provide financial assistance to business groups to help establish a BIDs*
  - General Fund

METRICS:

- The Number of BIDs in City
- Sales Tax Revenue in Impacted Zip Codes
- Percentage of Acceptably Clean Streets

PRIMARY ENTITY: Office of the City Clerk

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS: Board of Public Works, Office of the Mayor, City Administrative Office, Economic and Workforce Development Department

## **6. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

- **Recommendation:** Develop and launch a comprehensive clean and pride pilot campaign that targets the end-users of the City's services and programs. Use pilot as model for a citywide localized clean and pride campaign to launch at a later date.
- **Opportunity/Benefit:** Educate Angelenos and stakeholders on how they can play a greater role in taking care of the City:

### **CONTEXT:**

There are multiple layers to improving livability in the City. As the City reexamines its approach to attaining clean neighborhoods, adopting the recommendations outlined in this report, a strong public engagement strategy is a critical component of creating a culture of by-in and neighborhood pride. Recent efforts include district-level campaigns specifically aimed at improving the culture of cleanliness in the neighborhoods.

Councilman (CD1) Gil Cedillo's \$1 million *Keep It Clean* program, aggressively promoted the City's efforts to restore cleanliness to the district, while providing supplemental resources to remove a backlog of illegal dumping sites. Councilman (CD14) Jose Huizar's Clean Communities program, invested more than \$1.5 million to repair the district's worst sidewalks, planting and maintaining new trees, cleaning-up illegal dumping sites, and provided supplemental sanitation services. These campaigns and initiatives run by the City Council offices have successfully promoted a general message around cleanliness and safety. However, there has not been a city-wide coordinated educational initiative.

### **EXECUTION PLAN:**

With an overarching goal of delivering cleaner neighborhoods and utilizing the best localized approach to gaining civic by-in, it is worth developing a public campaign targeting five specific audiences: empowering the active citizen, engaging civic institutions, deterring the non-complier, inspiring the apathetic resident, and educating the newcomer. Each of the tailored messages would comprise of three components:

- *How to support their neighborhood*, from contacting the City's hotlines to understanding the work of the City's employees.

- *How to partner with the City's efforts*, from organizing a clean-up to BID formation.
- *Embracing and Sustaining a Community of Pride*, identifying the individual neighborhood's institutions of pride, and leveraging the physical infrastructure to promote and build a wider community of support.

**TARGETED END USERS:**

***The Active Citizen, Amplifier:***

- *Story*: City Resident; willing to contact 311 to report quality of life conditions.
- *Approach*: An action campaign must help the active citizen amplify the City's message: sharable links, videos, trinkets, and information packets, and efficient processes. The City's rebranding of its own efforts should include promoting the continued improvements driven by Mayor Garcetti's Back-to-Basics outcome goals and the City Council. Renewed efforts to ensure vulnerable communities have citizens as "co-partners" and local champions to amplify the value proposition of clean and safe communities.

***Engaging Civic Institutions:***

- *Story*: Non-Profit, Business, or Religious Institution willing to partner with City.
- *Approach*: Specific outreach to community partners to support the City's efforts and contribute to the greater push for livability improvements.

***The Non-Complier:***

- *Story*: Non-resident; Illegally dumps debris in neighborhoods
- *Approach*: Assume the non-complier has no incentive to follow the rules. A behavioral shift campaign must use images and descriptions on what rules are being broken, the penalties and enforcement of those rules, and an alternative to rule breaking. Outreach to property managers and landlords should be prioritizing, if data points to repeat offenders in proximity.

***The Apathetic Citizen:***

- *Story*: The Disappointed Resident.
- *Approach*: A strong push to improve the City's livability will continue to be a galvanizing matter for political and activism campaigns. A successful strategy with audience engagement depends heavily on communicating the improvement to the

City's 311-system. A city-wide campaign must address the forty percent of Angelinos who believe quality of life significantly declined over the decades since the civil unrests.<sup>67</sup>

***The Newcomer:***

- *Story:* New resident; Unsure of the rules and/or if the status quo is changeable.
- *Approach:* Clear guidelines and integration of consistent and quality messaging in existing communications with residents: billing statements, leasing documents and packets, and neighborhood packets. Contact with the residents and tenants, through property managers at move-in and move-out, should be prioritized.
- Based on existing enforcement programs for multi-family unit buildings, tenant violations are limited to tenant sanitation, with property owners and managers accountable for resolving most quality of life conditions in the City.<sup>68</sup>

REQUESTED RESOURCES:

- *Staff Time.* Board of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation
- *Budget Impact.* Seed-Funding a pilot a clean and pride campaign that empowers residents, engages businesses and community institutions.
- *Adopting City Wide.* Use pilot as model for a city-wide localized clean and pride campaign to be launched at later date.

METRICS:

- Cleanliness Ratings for Pilot Neighborhood

PRIMARY ENTITY: Board of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS: City Administrative Office

Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, Business Improvement Districts

## **7. ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE**

- **Recommendation:** Develop and implement an effective system of coordinated enforcement for the City's quality of life laws. Instruct the Board of Public Works and Bureau of Street Services—in partnership with the City Attorney's Office, City Administrative Office, Bureau of Sanitation, and Department of Building and Safety—to ensure the private properties fully comply with existing ordinances.
- **Opportunity/Benefit:** The City's municipal laws give enforcement agencies full authority to ensure compliance of quality of life standards. The growing costs of services and clean-ups, and a state of uncleanness in parts of the City, create an opportunity to increase enforcement.

### **CONTEXT**

To spur the urban continuum desired in the City's neighborhood, economic, and transportation aspirations, quality of life systems and successful public-private collaborations must accompany robust enforcement. Enforcement is the regulatory system for livability in the City and infers a strong message of accountability. Indirectly, enforcement is assurance behind the City's maintenance of its standard of living. Declining resources to manage the City's enforcement, following budget constraints were followed by messages of "limited resources" and "limited enforcement" of the City's existing quality of life laws. While this action speaks to the City's push for transparency, it indirectly sends the wrong message to non-compliers and offenders that the City's ordinances for streets, sidewalks, and neighborhoods won't be enforced. The City's laws give enforcement agencies sufficient authority to ensure compliance, through long-standing municipal codes, including:

- LAMC 56.08: Property Owner Obstructing Sidewalk [ 1,466 citations ]
- LAMC 41.46: Property Owner Failing to keep sidewalk clean [ 684 citations ]
- LAMC 62.49: Depositing Building Materials on Public Streets & Near Fire Hydrants [ 0 ]
- LAMC 66.25: Depositing Solid Waste on Streets or Los Angeles River [ 2,189 citations ]
- PC374.4: Litter/Waste on Public / Private Property [ 0 ]
- HS117555: Allowing Sewage or Garbage on public, private streets, property [ 0 ]

— VC 22523: Abandoned Vehicle [ 0 ]

[FY2012-2013 Citations Issued]

**EXECUTION PLAN:**

An effective system of enforcement in the City must be prioritized in three specific categories: the maintenance of public right of ways, and private properties, and chronic, major offenders.

**Property Owners / Landlords:**

*Common Scenarios:*

- Residents moving out—or discarding bulky items on streets—who don't know the City's procedures or fear additional fees from the City or property owners.
- Heavy trafficked streets, sidewalks, and pathways that lack regular cleaning or tax-assessed coordinated services.

*Enforcement Strategy:*

- Short-Term: Inform and educate non-compliant property-owners about laws and residential procedures. Instruct the Board of Public Works and Bureau of Street Services—in partnership with the City Attorney's Office, City Administrative Office, Bureau of Sanitation, and Department of Building and Safety—to coordinate efforts. With data captured by reports to the City's 311 system, agencies can identify and cite chronic offenders.
- Long-Term: Study the implementation of the City's inspectors implementing a reoccurring, scheduled cleanliness compliance program, similar to proactive inspection operations in New York and San Francisco.

**Chronic Illegal Dumper:**

*Common Scenarios:*

- Non-Residents taking advantage of our pick-up services or circumventing the costs of waste/item removal in neighboring cities and illegally dumping in the City.
- Apartment dwellers of privately managed-haulers who circumvent building or landlord expenditures, dumping items on the City's streets.



- Commercial entities who pick-up in other regions and dump in the City's neighborhoods.
- Unknown sources adding garbage, hazardous waste, and additional items to existing bulky items placed on streets.
- Unregulated commercial activity. Thousands of illegal vendors and unregistered businesses that discard garbage and unsold items in neighborhoods, parks, and waterways.

*Enforcement Strategy:*

- The City Attorney's Illegal Dumping Task Force, launched in November 2014, has identified chronic dumping hot-spots throughout the City, analyzing sites, gathering information from community members, conducting joint inspections, prosecuting violators and clean-ups, through the Clean Streets LA program. The Task Force's work includes surveying locations across the City and developing an enforcement strategy which will include submitting cases to the City Attorney for prosecution.
- The Task Force includes the Board of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation, Bureau of Watershed Protection, Bureau of Street Services, LAPD, Port Police, Building and Safety, Housing Authority, County Fire Health Hazmat, State Regional Water Quality Control Board, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and Los Angeles City Council Offices in Districts 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, and 15.
- This report recommends funding a full-time investigator to work within the City Attorney's Office and coordinating investigative research, inspections, and intel across agencies. Existing investigation coordination is shared among current staff and depends heavily on the City's attorneys.

**Maintaining Vacant Land Parcels:**

*Common Scenarios:*

- Abandoned furniture or trash on vacant parcels and underdeveloped land.



*Enforcement Strategy:*

- Two existing City programs provide scheduled inspection and enforcement for property in the City. The Los Angeles Fire Department's Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (or "Zone") program enacts a fee for annual property inspections in the City's fire hazardous zones. Inspectors issue initial warnings for properties out-of-compliance and schedule follow-up inspections. For property owners, who don't meet compliance after the second inspection, the City arranges for clean-up, charging back the cost of clearance to property owners. Property owners pay an additional \$300 Inspection Fee and a \$1026 Administrative Fee.

The City's Bureau of Street Services Weed Abatement Program—modeled after the "Zone" program—provides an annual reminder to a selected listing of roughly 15,000 vacant lot property owners.<sup>69</sup> Following the annual inspection, properties out-of-compliance are cleaned and costs then assessed on the property's tax bills. For the vacant lots that are not included in the City's Weed Abatement program and the LAFD's Zone program, enforcement of quality of life conditions is managed by the Bureau of Street Services. The Bureau of Street Services inspects vacant lot complaints, issuing an initial citation and follows-up after 60 days to review compliance. In 2014, the City issued 17 notices of violations of LAMC 5802, which were resolved without the City cleaning them.

- *Identification:* As blight-filled vacant parcels are identified—via the City's Scouts program and 311—the Bureau of Street Services would have a regular baseline of unreported blighted parcels, initiating the City's process to contact the property owners for abatement.
- *Clean-Up:* If failed abatement occurs and blight reports continue, the City would proactively schedule clean-up and bill the property owners.

REQUESTED RESOURCES:

- *Staff Time:* Board of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation, and Bureau of Street Services in partnership with the City Attorney's Office, City Administrative Office, and Department of Building and Safety
- *Budget Impact:* To Be Determined
- *Funding Sources:*
  - General Fund Allocation: Commercial / Industrial Enforcement
  - Solid Waste Resource Fund: Enforcement of residential solid waste compliance.

**METRICS:**

Illegal dumping incidents; Percentage of Acceptably Clean Streets;  
Number of Blighted Vacant Lots

**PRIMARY ENTITIES:** Board of Public Works and Bureau of Street Services

**ADDITIONAL PARTNERS:** Office of the City Attorney, City Administrative Office, Bureau of Sanitation, Los Angeles Police Department, and Department of Building and Safety

**8. REDUCING BLIGHT ON VACANT LOTS**

- **Recommendation:** Study best practices adopted across the country to successfully manage supply of vacant and underdeveloped land parcels—more than 22,000. Instruct the City Administrative Office, with assistant from the Economic and Workforce Development Department, and other appropriate departments to explore immediate and long-term opportunities.
- **Opportunity/Benefit:**
  - Undeveloped land and vacant lots are accessible targets for illegal dumping, blighting the City's neighborhoods.
  - An opportunity exists, to collaborate with philanthropic and civic organizations to identify the feasibility of solutions, enacted by peer cities, to manage impact and ultimately reduce supply.

CONTEXT:

More than 22,000 vacant land parcels populate the City<sup>70</sup>—roughly 10,000 acres or an equivalent of three downtowns. When unmaintained and unreported, these private and public parcels can blight the City's neighborhoods and are vulnerable to illegal dumping activities, graffiti, and unlawful encampments. Efforts to temporarily activate these spaces, convert blighted lots into urban farms or pocket parks, continue to gather momentum. The City, however, has an opportunity to collaborate with philanthropic and civic organizations to identify the feasibility of solutions, enacted by peer cities, to manage impact and ultimately reduce supply. For the property owners who enable blight and illegal dumping—and avoid the City's civic-minded temporary alternative uses—the Bureau of Street Services and Los Angeles Fire Department are the City's lead enforcement agencies.

San Francisco, San Diego, Philadelphia, San Antonio and Atlanta, have joined Providence, RI as the latest cities who've partnered with the digital startup Opportunity Space.<sup>71</sup> Featured as a civic innovation at the 2014 *CityLab*—hosted in the City and sponsored by Aspen Institute, *The Atlantic*, and Bloomberg Philanthropies—Opportunity Space provides an online catalogue of city-owned properties, underdeveloped land, and vacant land parcels.<sup>72 73</sup> The City should consider cataloguing existing assets and underdeveloped land parcels, indexing this information for easy public access. This would subsequently support the City's efforts to improve identification of city-owned assets for filming and locations for prospective development opportunities.

EXECUTION PLAN:

For the long-term solution to the city's vacant land management challenges, the City should study efforts to drive development of vacant underdeveloped lots and abandoned properties. A study of solutions for the City's vacant land parcels should focus on streamlining the development and ease of access to discover the City's most valuable assets—underdeveloped land. More than 120 cities have created Land Banks to address the problem of vacant lots: consolidating ownership of city-owned properties, acquiring privately owned tax-delinquent properties, clearing tax liens and tangled titles, and selling properties for development or community uses.

The City helped launch a public-space specific land trust in 2002, led by then Councilmen Garcetti and Ed Reyes.<sup>74</sup> Tasked with converting vacant parcels into livable spaces, the Trust has fostered the development of nearly 30 park projects in underserved areas of the City.<sup>75</sup> A Land Bank's implications are much broader in scope, but the City's collaborative process setting up the trust, offers contextual parallels.<sup>76</sup>

The Ford Foundation, Mott Foundation, Kresge Foundation, JP Morgan, and Bank of America are among the philanthropic organizations that support the Center for Community Progress, which has developed the most extensive research on land bank opportunities for cities.<sup>77</sup> The nation's largest land bank effort is now in Philadelphia. Philadelphia was spending more than \$20 million a year on maintenance and enforcement of vacant land parcels and determined that blighted properties eroded the value of neighboring properties by \$3.6 billion citywide. The Philadelphia Land Bank is essentially a centralized entity for managing, enforcing, purchasing, and using the City's 32,000 underdeveloped and vacant properties.<sup>78</sup>

REQUESTED RESOURCES:

- *Staff Time:* City Administrative Office
- *Budget Impact:* To Be Determined

PRIMARY ENTITY: City Administrative Office

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS: Office of the Mayor, Office of the Controller, Economic and Workforce Development Department, Department of Water and Power, General Services Department, and Recreation and Parks

## **9. UPDATE STREET SWEEPING**

- **Recommendation:** Modernize the City's street sweeping program. Instruct the Board of Public Works, Bureau of Street Services, and Bureau of Sanitation to hire a consultant to assist in developing a new program that executes the city's *Water Quality Compliance Master Plan (2009)* urban runoff goals.<sup>79</sup>
- **Opportunity/Benefit:** An updated street sweeping program would not only deliver clean streets, aligning the service-delivery to the City's busiest and highest needs areas, but reduce urban runoff, supporting the City's sustainability goals.

### **CONTEXT:**

Street Cleaning in the City serves two primary functions: removing visible litter, trash, and debris from the public roadways, and, preventing toxins and urban runoff from entering the stormwater system and contributing to the pollution of the City's waterways. Trash has been designated as a major pollution in the City's urban runoff and advanced stormwater capture efforts have improved the quality of the City's waterways.<sup>80</sup> Initial findings in the *High Trash Generating and Control Measures* report call for improved trash and pollution control efforts, including street sweeping of the City's dirtiest streets.

In 2009, the City adopted the *Water Quality Compliance Master Plan*,<sup>81</sup> providing strategic direction essential for planning, budgeting, and funding efforts to comply with water quality mandates, including reducing the City's urban runoff. This plan was developed in response to City Council's request to ensure the City meets its federal and state mandates. California cities are required by EPA Clean Water Act Regulations and California State Water Resource Control Board rules to enact preventative measures that prevent urban runoff from polluting the City's water systems.

The nation's largest cities and peer jurisdictions in the county provide daily, weekly, and monthly cleaning of the vast majority of their municipality's streets, particularly walkable, high-trash generating corridors. The City's existing Street Cleaning program—developed prior to the City's current population density and multi-modal transit system—cleans a lower share of its streets than its counterparts with comparable urban density and pedestrian activity.

The existing street sweeping program does not overlay areas the identified as the highest trash-generating areas treats all posted commercial, residential and industrial streets equivalently. This current service delivery falls short of stormwater prevention best practices outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and recommendations adopted in the City's strategic plan. The current street sweeping program includes:

- 4,721 miles of weekly posted routes (95% Achieved)
- 8,058 miles of occasional routes—including the city's major commercial corridors and tourist attractions. (15% Achieved)

The City's current street sweeping services are funded through the Stormwater Pollution Abatement Fund,<sup>82</sup> an annual tax on property owners, Gas Tax, and General Fund allocations. San Diego's *Street Cleaning Water Quality Protection Project* is a best practice<sup>83</sup> for establishing a new street cleaning program. San Diego reexamined its street cleaning process to comply with the state's stormwater mandates and launched *ThinkBlue*,<sup>84</sup> an initiative to engage the public in efforts to improve the region's water quality and deliver cleaner streets.

As part of the project, San Diego launched a two-year pilot to examine the best frequency, equipment, and methods to sweep up litter and invisible dissolved metals, including car brake dust. The City of Los Angeles has the nation's highest residential car density, with 3,800 vehicles per square mile.<sup>85</sup> The EPA provides a number of best practices and case studies on scientifically sound techniques to reduce urban runoff.<sup>86</sup>

#### EXECUTION PLAN:

Instruct the Board of Public Works, the Bureau of Street Services, and the Bureau of Sanitation to hire a consultant to assist the City in developing a new street sweeping program. Through an RFP process, the consultant must deliver a plan to achieve two specific outcomes: an updated, optimized street cleaning program that maximizes cleanliness of the City's public streets; and executes the city's *Water Quality Compliance Master Plan* urban runoff prevention goals. City agencies must allocate time to support the



consultant's work, providing data and resources to develop the final proposal for the new street cleaning program in the City.

REQUESTED RESOURCES:

- *Staff Time:* BOPW, BOS, BSS, LADOT, CAO, CLA, Office of the Mayor
- *Budget Impact:* Funding of a consulting firm to develop the City's new street cleaning and urban runoff prevent program.
- *Funding Source* Funding this program executes the recommendation presented in the City's *Water Quality Compliance Master Plan's* priority goals and financed by:
  - *Stormwater Pollution Abatement Fund: Departmental appropriations and special purpose fund appropriations for the collection, treatment, and abatement of stormwater*
  - *General Fund: Commercial corridors and public spaces maintenance*

METRICS: Percentage of Acceptably Clean Neighborhoods, Stormwater Cleaning Costs, Cost Recovery Revenue

RESPONSIBLE ENTITIES: Board of Public Works, Bureau of Street Services

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS: City Administrative Office, Chief Legislative Analyst, LADOT, Office of the Mayor

## **10. BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS**

- **Recommendation:** Instruct the Board of Public Works to oversee and coordinate implementation of recommendations and short-term and long-term directives.
- **Opportunity/Benefit:** The City's Agencies operating working together to create opportunities for more collaboration and information sharing and improved outcomes.

### **CONTEXT:**

The agencies that report to the Department of Public Works are the most visible entities responsible for maintaining the City. However, a broad set of public agencies (see attached summary), financing tools, state and federal regulations, and private and community partners collectively deliver the livability of the City's neighborhoods. The entities work independently to support the all-encompassing goal of maintaining cleanliness in the City's neighborhoods:

### **City Agencies**

- Board of Public Works
  - Bureau of Sanitation (Bulky Item Pick-Up, Alley Clean-Up, Stormwater Clean-Up) [SRF/MBIF/SAF]
  - Office of Community Beautification (Graffiti Removal, Graffiti Rating, Community Partners, Volunteer Clean-Ups).
  - Bureau of Street Services (Street Sweeping, Forestry Pick-Up, Street Enforcement) [GF/SWAF]
  - Customer Call Center (Bulky Item Pick-Up Requests, Illegal Dumping Reporting) [SRF/MBIF]
- City Attorney's Office (Illegal Dumping Prosecution, Neighborhood Prosecutors,
- City Council Offices (Local Coordination, Clean-Ups, Roving Trucks) [GF]
- Mayor's Office (City Services, Budget & Innovation, Great Streets & Promise Zone, Chief Sustainability Officer: Neighborhood Livability Index) [GF]
- LAPD (Illegal Dumping Investigations, Administrative Citation Enforcement) [GF]
- Department of Building & Safety (Illegal Dumping Reporting, Multi-Family Unit Enforcement) [GF]

- Department of Water & Power (Bulky Item Billing & Communications) [SRF]
- City Clerk's Office (Business Improvement Districts and Special Tax Assessments) [GF]
- Environmental Justice Unit Investigations) [SRF/GF]
- City Administrative Office (City Services Resource Analysis, City Asset Management) [SRF/GF]
- Information Technology Agency/311 (Communications, Bulky Item Pick-Up Request, Illegal Dumping Reporting) [SRF/GF]
- LADOT (Pedestrian & Vehicle Traffic Management, Street Sweeping Enforcement) [GF]
- Department of Recreation and Parks [GF]

**Regional / State / Federal Agencies:**

- CalTran (Highway Mediums, Adopt-A-Highway)
- METRO (Bus Stops and Subway Stations)
- EPA (Waterways Protection, Illegal Dumping of Hazardous Waste)
- California Conservation Corps (Clean & Green Programs)

**Government Authorized Independent Entities:**

- Homeowner Associations
- Business Improvement Districts
- Special Tax Allocation & Sidewalk Assessment Districts

[GF: General Fund] [SRF: Solid Resource Fund] [SFRF: Street Furniture Revenue Fund]  
[MBIF: Multi-Family Bulky Item Fund] [Stormwater Allocation Fund]

**EXECUTION PLAN:**

The cities referenced in this report all have Public Works departments accountable with coordination of resources and oversight to deliver agreed upon livability directives. The San Francisco's Board of Public Works, as directed by Proposition C, established standards and conducts annual performances audits of the City's street, sidewalk and park maintenance and cleaning operations.<sup>87</sup> Philadelphia's Street Department and its divisions oversee its network of streets, roadways, and all duties related to maintenance and cleanliness.<sup>88</sup> The Department of Sanitation in New York, the largest municipal sanitation department in the

country, is one unified department with divisions that serve 59 districts and executes all cleanliness and maintenance functions.<sup>89</sup>

Adoption and execution of this report's recommendations will improve reporting, improve transactional and performance data gathering, strengthen existing tools, and work toward long-term solutions to deliver the desired outcomes. Accountability and coordination among agencies and oversight will ensure the delivery of the outcome goals, align processes and programs, improve effective enforcement and compliance, and enhance communication and cooperation with the public. This is important to deliver the Back-to-Basic livability goals and implement systems and programs that improve quality of life in the City. The Mayor and City Council should instruct the Board of Public, in collaboration with the CAO Office to provide:

- *Oversight*: Ensuring deliverables are carried out; Resources are identified; Pilot programs are adapted.
- *Coordination*: Fostering collaboration and teamwork to deliver outcome goals; Establishing MOU for public ungoverned spaces within the City.
- *Planning*: Sequencing initiatives and setting expectations.
- *Accessibility and Responsiveness*: Transparency and adaptability.
- *Accomplishment of Measurable Outcome*: Baseline existing outcomes, work toward targeted goals.

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## SUMMARY OF CURRENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RELATED PROGRAMS

[illegible]