

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

**DATE:** February 16, 2018

**TO:** Honorable Members  
Los Angeles City Council

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

**SUBJECT: REPORT BACK ON THREE MOTIONS REGARDING LASAN LIVABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY PROGRAM – ILLEGAL DUMPING AND HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT CLEAN-UPS**

On March 28, May 18, and November 1, 2017, three separate Council Motions were introduced that were related to LA Sanitation's (LASAN) Livability and Environmental Quality Program (LEQP):

- On March 28, 2017, Motion 17-0331 (Huizar, O'Farrell) instructs LASAN to report on the status and implementation of Homeless Outreach and Proactive Engagement (HOPE) Teams and on the staffing for the HOPE Team and Clean Street Initiative (CSI), including streamlining and expedited filling of vacant positions.
- On May 18, 2017, as part of Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-18 adopted budget 17-0600-S58, LASAN was instructed to report to the Homelessness and Poverty Committee on metrics to measure the success of HOPE Teams.
- On November 1, 2107, Motion 14-1499-S6 (Huizar, O'Farrell, Price) instructs LASAN to report on the backlog of the Clean Streets LA (CSLA) encampment service requests and efforts to address the areas of high demand. LASAN should also report on resources needed to respond to areas of high demand so that the backlog is reduced to such a point that an equitable deployment of CSLA resources is adequate to manage service requests Citywide.

This report provides an overall review of the various tasks associated with LEQP and the implementation of the City of Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 56.11 and Mayor's Executive Directive No. 8. The report also provides LASAN's responses to the instructions listed above as well a detailed summary of the services provided, results and any additional needs.

### **Background**

The City of Los Angeles (City) is responsible for the maintenance of sidewalks and other public areas owned, managed or maintained by the City. These public areas must remain safe, clean, sanitary and accessible for public use by all individuals. In order to promote the general public's health and safety of all public areas, while balancing the needs of the City's population at all levels of livelihood, including the homeless population, the City recently made amendments to LAMC 56.11 to regulate any personal property disposed of, left or stored in public areas.

LASAN serves as the Designated Administrative Agency (DAA) under this code. All LASAN's livability programs are conducted in collaboration with and support from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA).

The four programs associated with this effort are:

1. Operation Healthy Streets – Skid Row (OHS- Skid Row)
2. Operation Healthy Streets – Venice (OHS- Venice)
3. Clean Streets LA (CSLA)
4. Homeless Outreach and Proactive Engagement (HOPE)

### **Operation Healthy Streets – Skid Row**

In May 2012, OHS-Skid Row was initiated in response to a public health concerns in Skid Row. In response to the need, LASAN developed a comprehensive cleaning program to clean impacted streets in the Skid Row area. Initially, the streets were cleaned once every quarter with spot cleaning conducted once every month. Since then, LASAN has increased the frequency of cleaning. Every street in the Skid Row area is cleaned on a two-week cycle. This includes removing any health hazards and disinfecting the sidewalks to prevent any disease outbreaks. Our teams coordinate closely with the social services providers and LAPD. Outreach with the homeless is conducted prior to and during the clean-ups. El Pueblo was recently added to the clean-up schedule for weekly Tuesday service. In addition, there are 56 trash receptacles that are picked up twice a day, seven days a week. These trash receptacles services were not budgeted in the OHS operations. On the average, 40 tons of waste is removed monthly including large volumes of human waste and a large number of sharps and needles.

In addition to the trash receptacles' service, LASAN received many requests from businesses in the area represented by Central City East Association (CCEA) and LAPD, for a number of streets outside the established OHS area boundaries that needed to be cleaned and incorporated into the OHS clean-up schedule. A pilot was initiated from October 2, 2017 to October 14, 2017 to address the areas outside the Skid Row established clean-up boundaries. Based on the impact, the businesses were concerned with reducing the current cleaning schedule to expand the clean-up area using the same resources. The expansion was not permanently implemented and continues to be considered.

### **Operation Healthy Streets – Venice**

LASAN continues to conduct comprehensive cleaning every Friday in the Venice area as part of OHS-Venice. Outreach with the homeless is conducted prior to and during the clean-ups. On the average, 12 tons of waste are removed monthly with large volumes of human waste and a large number of sharps and needles.

### **Clean Streets LA**

Prior to January 1, 2018, LASAN had four CSLA teams working across the City to conduct clean-ups associated with illegal dumping and homeless encampments. On January 1, 2018, a

fifth team was added to the program. LASAN continues to implement its standard operating protocols for engagement with the homeless as part of the homeless encampment clean-ups. These protocols include extensive outreach through LAHSA prior to the authorization of any homeless encampment clean-ups. In addition, the protocols ensure that adequate assistance is provided to the homeless who are physically or mentally impaired prior to commencing the clean-ups. In calendar year 2017, more than 12,000 tons of trash and discards were collected from homeless encampments and illegal dumping locations and 2,720 tons were collected from servicing the 3,500 trash receptacles located throughout the City. On the average, about 1,200 tons of waste are picked-up monthly.

### **Homeless Outreach and Proactive Engagement (HOPE)**

The purpose of the HOPE Teams is two-fold: 1) Improve the City's overall response to the complex and diverse needs of the unsheltered homeless community; and 2) Support healthy neighborhoods. The HOPE Teams will accomplish this by linking homeless individuals with appropriate services, responding to neighborhood issues and concerns as called for in LAMC 56.11, and developing strategies for dealing with situations that may arise among unsheltered homeless individuals, including those experiencing mental illness and substance abuse disorders.

The HOPE Teams consist of personnel from LASAN, LAPD, LAHSA, and assistance from a Deputy City Attorney from the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office. The LAPD assigns a total of 10 police officers and one Sergeant to the team. These are police officers who have been working with homeless-related assignments, such as outreach teams. LAHSA provides four outreach and engagement specialists for each HOPE Team, while LASAN assigns four employees to support each team. Currently we have a total of six teams. Four are deployed from the City's LAPD bureaus: Central, South, Valley and West Bureau; one Citywide; and one assigned to the LA River. The Citywide and LA River Teams were launched in early January 2018. On the average, about 150 tons of waste are removed monthly.

The following are LASAN's responses to the instructions indicated above in chronological order:

**1. LASAN to report on the status and implementation of HOPE Teams and on the staffing for the HOPE Team and CSI, including streamlining and expedited filling of vacant positions. LASAN was also instructed to report to the Homelessness and Poverty Committee on metrics to measure the success of HOPE Teams.**

At the time the Motion 17-0331 was introduced on March 28, 2017, LASAN and LAPD in collaboration with LAHSA were operating four HOPE Teams across the City in the four LAPD bureaus. The HOPE Teams have worked with the homeless population to ensure that adequate mental, medical and social services will be provided while ensuring staying in compliance with LAMC 56.11.

There are two classes that are critical to the staffing of the HOPE teams. These are the Environmental Compliance Inspector (ECI) class and the Solid Resource Collection Truck Operator (RCTO) class. LASAN has been working with the Personnel Department to fill vacancies in these two classes. Since January 2017, LASAN have been able to hire 57 ECIs to

support these activities and 84 RCTOs. However, the turnover and attrition in these classes is extremely high especially when in the positions that involved homeless encampment clean-ups. For example, even with the 57 ECIs hired in 2017, we currently have 22 vacancies in this class. To address the high turnover, we need an expedited hiring process for these classes. As such, LASAN will be working with the Personnel Department to obtain authorization and proceed with continuous examining process for both these classes.

In addition, background checks are required for ECI positions performing this work. Currently, those background checks are considered lower priority than other public safety positions, so it can take several months. It is recommended that the background checks for these positions be granted equal priority as other public safety positions.

In FY 2017-18, six months of funding were provided for the two additional HOPE Teams which were launched on January 8, 2018: LA River HOPE and Citywide HOPE. The LA River Team will patrol the Los Angeles River and three main tributaries (half a mile from centerline on both sides). The three tributaries include Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, and the Arroyo Seco. The LA River has been broken down into five zones (see Exhibit A). Staff will focus on one zone per week in a five-week cycle (see Exhibit B). The team will focus on bike paths, alleys and streets (ROW) abutting the Los Angeles River in the identified five zones.

The other team will focus on citywide functions assisting the already established four teams with the many rapid responses required in each LAPD bureau. The team will focus on high priority areas with the highest concentration of service needs. There high priority areas are along the 101 freeway corridor in Hollywood, the 110 freeway corridor and the 10 freeway corridor in the vicinity of the downtown area. The Citywide team functions include:

- Patrol identified high priority areas making a presence several times in a one-week time span (see Exhibit C).
- Patrol identified high priority areas (see Exhibit D) to enforce all LAMC 56.11 violations and quality of life issues such as illegal dumping and pollution.

During calendar year 2017, HOPE Teams responded to 1,505 right-of-way enforcement calls and processed a total of 1,512 tents and removed 502 tons of waste including 3,670 needles and sharps (see Exhibit E). In addition, the HOPE teams had 16,312 contacts with the homeless while referring 3,637 to services.

#### HOPE Team Make-up and Staffing

Each Rapid Response (RRT)/HOPE team consists of four LASAN team members: two Environmental Compliance Inspectors/Officers (ECI/ECO), one Refuse Collection Truck Operator (RCTO), and one Maintenance Laborer (ML). The LAPD support is provided by each corresponding Bureau.

An ECI/ECO assigned to this program performs duties related to illegal personal property storage in the right-of-way. The mission of these teams is to gain compliance through education, enforcement and impoundments related to LAMC 56.11 on City property and public right-of-

ways throughout the City. Specific tasks include being the operational lead, performing health and safety hazard determinations, hazard categorizing unknown chemicals, preparing legal documentation (reports/metrics), and encampment assessments, site security, and general oversight of the impoundment and related clean-up operations. The MLs and RCTOs will collect and transport solid waste for disposal.

**2. LASAN to report on the backlog of the CSLA encampment service requests and efforts to address the areas of high demand. LASAN should also report on resources needed to respond to areas of high demand so that the backlog is reduced to such a point that an equitable deployment of CSLA resources is adequate to manage service requests Citywide.**

LASAN launched the Clean Streets Initiative, now CSLA, in FY 2014-15 for enhanced citywide clean-up of abandoned waste in public rights-of-way. The goal of this program is to provide clean-up service for locations that require specialized personnel and/or servicing equipment. These locations include homeless encampments, locations with heavy loads, such as concrete and asphalt, excess vegetation, and excessive abandoned solid waste. The program has expanded each year. Currently, the CSLA Program consists of five CSLA teams, Street Cleanliness Indexing (CleanStat) Team, and a Street Receptacle Team servicing 4,750 refuse and 500 recycling street receptacles.

As of late 2015, the bulk majority of all service requests have been processed through MyLA311, which has been utilized as a "one" source service request data collection system. The MyLA311 application is the main way for Los Angeles residents and business owners to report homeless encampments and illegal dumping. The MyLA311 system has a built-in logic feature that analyzes each new service request to determine if a request is a new request or a duplicate request. The system is designed to evaluate each new request based on multiple attributes including location radius, service request type, and status of the request. In the event a request has been submitted into the system and a resident is entering a similar request through the MyLA311 app, or through the 24/7 LASAN Customer Care Center, the resident will be informed that a similar request is already in the system (open/pending) and the resident will have the option of a notification when the request is completed or they can elect to enter a new request. Consequently, it is common for the system to have duplicate requests for most locations. It is also common for one location to generate multiple requests as it moves through the authorization and clean-up process. Duplicate service requests in CSLA are linked to one main service request which is tied to the location's homeless encampment authorization (see Exhibit F). Linked service requests remain open through the homeless encampment scheduling process and are closed when the homeless encampment is serviced. The authorization is completed and the associated service requests are closed simultaneously.

The following table displays how the number of service requests can alter from each authorization. In 2017 LASAN closed 15,806 service requests that were associated with approximately 2,000 authorizations. For every comprehensive cleanup conducted, there is an average of six service requests per authorization.

Service Request Assigned to Authorization		
Council District	Authorization Number	Count of Associated SR's
9	171118023	7
9	170925008	16
13	171214008	68
13	170720007	4
14	170412010	99
14	171215008	2

LASAN manages the requests through regular field inspections of new locations. Locations are vetted for the presence of active encampments in the public right-of-way and those requiring service are referred to the CSLA program. Locations that do not require homeless encampment authorizations are serviced by LASAN's district yards if there are bulky items, or are closed and not requiring service.

The servicing of homeless encampments is unique in that although LASAN services encampments, removes health hazards, bulky items, and loose debris, there is currently nothing that prevents homeless individuals from immediately returning to the same location once the authorized location is serviced. This often causes serviced locations to generate requests post-cleaning and to re-enter the authorization and scheduling process. Additionally, many homeless encampments are large in size and require complex logistics and equipment to service. Other homeless encampments in locations such as conservation areas can only be serviced at certain times during the year. LASAN works with all local agencies to coordinate joint clean-up operations and schedules in conjunction with all relevant agencies on an ongoing basis to ensure that complex locations are scheduled as quickly as possible.

Each Council District is guaranteed a minimum of two days per month for comprehensive homeless encampment service using CSLA teams. Some Council Districts are then allotted an additional number of CSLA homeless encampment and illegal dumping days based on the number of MyLA311 service requests in their district. Currently, the highest need districts average four days per month for comprehensive homeless encampment clean-ups. Additionally, the OHS program supplies dedicated staff to the daily clean-up of the Skid Row area and the weekly clean-up of the Venice Boardwalk. On each Council Office's designated service days, LASAN coordinates with the Council District staff to prioritize locations for the clean-up schedule.

The current authorization system allows for each authorization to remain open for 90 days after the location is approved. Once the location is serviced, the authorization is closed and a new authorization must be obtained before the location can be cleaned again. At times this can be challenging as chronic locations must be quickly reauthorized so that they can be serviced again. To streamline the authorization process, improve workflow, and manage the deployment of resources, LASAN is developing an automated process to respond to city-wide homeless encampment clean-ups. This will ensure that more locations are being authorized in a timely manner, signatures are obtained by the signing authorities on an ongoing basis, and authorized locations are automatically routed for posting on the Council District's assigned service date. Automatically preparing authorized locations for posting will prevent locations from remaining

on the list for a lengthy period of time, which also causes the related service requests to remain open.

The number of service authorizations has increased in 2017. Although this indicates that LASAN has serviced more encampments, the number of pending service requests remained unchanged or even increased. There has been a nearly three-fold increase in the number of service requests between April 2016 and end of 2017. In April to May 2016, these averaged 700 service requests per month. By August to October 2017, that average had risen to 1,900 service requests per month. This increase is driven by: 1) increase in homeless population, 2) the City's successful outreach efforts to our residents to report homeless encampments, and 3) an increased access to, and awareness of, ways to make service requests. In 2016, LASAN closed 8,641 service requests. In 2017, the number of closed service request rose to 15,806 (see Exhibit G).

The table below depicts the level of services related to homeless encampments in each council district in 2017 along with the current open service requests in each council district. As seen in the table and as depicted in Exhibits D and F, there are specific areas in the City that are highly impacted by homelessness encampments and have the highest concentration of open service requests. There high priority areas are along the 101 freeway corridor in Hollywood, the 110 freeway corridor and the 10 freeway corridor in the vicinity of the downtown area.

Council District	Closed Number of Service Request	% of Closed Number of Service Request	Pending Number of Service Request	% of Pending Number of Service Request	Total Number of Service Request	% of Grand Total
CD 1	1,098	6.86%	343	8.83%	1,441	7.25%
CD 2	704	4.40%	66	1.70%	770	3.87%
CD3	756	4.73%	23	0.59%	779	3.92%
CD 4	742	4.64%	80	2.06%	822	4.14%
CD 5	968	6.05%	69	1.78%	1,037	5.19%
CD 6	1,002	6.26%	231	5.95%	1,233	6.20%
CD 7	704	4.40%	38	0.98%	742	3.73%
CD 8	698	4.36%	91	2.34%	789	3.97%
CD 9	1,529	9.56%	778	20.03%	2,307	11.61%
CD 10	1,426	8.91%	175	4.51%	1,601	8.05%
CD 11	926	5.79%	81	2.09%	1,007	5.07%
CD 12	559	3.49%	49	1.26%	608	3.06%
CD 13	2,351	14.69%	696	17.92%	3,047	15.33%
CD 14	2,211	13.82%	1,069	27.52%	3,280	16.50%
CD 15	326	2.04%	95	2.45%	421	2.12%
<b>Grant Total</b>	<b>16,000</b>		<b>3,884</b>		<b>19,884</b>	

As indicated in the November 1, 2017, Motion 14-1499-S6; CD-9, CD-13, and CD-14 currently have the highest number of homeless encampment service requests, accounting for 60 percent of pending requests. Scheduling the service teams utilizing a data-driven strategy is the best approach to reduce the number of service requests in high priority areas. In January 2018, LASAN added a fifth CSLA team. The fifth team will be scheduled using data to deploy the

team to chronic or longstanding requests in high-need Council Districts. Its deployment will be based on the number of pending service requests, starting from the highest and oldest, to the lowest and most recent. Furthermore, we will work with Council District staff and others in ensuring that service requests are captured in the backlog by also conducting field assessments.

In order to provide a sustainable homeless encampments and illegal dumping clean-up service, LASAN recommends the implementation of a systematic clean-up plan that is based primarily on street indexes where highly impacted areas will be cleaned-up on an established and frequent schedule. Other less impacted areas will be serviced as needed. We can accomplish this plan by dividing the City into four separate service areas that match the geographical boundaries of the four LAPD bureaus. A total of five service teams, three CSLA and two HOPE will be assigned to each service area, excluding LA River HOPE, which will service its own service area.

### **Recommendations**

To address the highest concentration of open service requests in the highest priority areas, LASAN recommends that the Citywide Hope Team and the 5<sup>th</sup> CSLA team launched in January 2018 be focused on high priority areas with the highest concentration of open service requests Citywide.

To ensure that the CSLA teams and the HOPE teams are fully operational at all times, it is important to fill vacancies in an expeditious and timely manner. As such, LASAN will be working with the Personnel Department to obtain authorization and proceed with the continuous examining process for both these classes. In addition, the background checks for these positions should be granted equal priority as other public safety positions.

While LA Sanitation has been able to increase the levels of service with the addition of CSLA and HOPE teams, the current resources do not match the required level of effort needed for the increasing homeless population. On January 26, LASAN submitted a supplemental budget request for six CSLA teams, three HOPE teams, and four homeless encampment posting teams to enable the geographically-based service model described above. This would result in three CSLA teams, two HOPE teams, and one posting team per LAPD bureau (with one OHS team in lieu of a CSLA team in the central Bureau). The LA River Hope Team would remain separate from these geographic areas.

The LASAN recommends that the Council, subject to approval of the Mayor:

1. Authorize LASAN to deploy its Citywide HOPE team and the 5<sup>th</sup> CSLA in the areas with the highest priority and the highest concentration of open homeless encampment service requests;
2. Instruct Personnel Department to make the examining process for the following the Environmental Compliance Inspector (ECI) class and the Solid Resource Collection Truck Operator (RCTO) class a continuous examining process;
3. Instruct the Personnel Department to prioritize background checks for ECIs with other public safety positions; and



4. Instruct LASAN to work with the City Administrative Office and the Mayor's Office of Budget and Innovation team on the FY 2018-19 supplemental budget a request to increase LASAN LEQP staff and resources to adequately manage the increased workload.

For further information, please contact me or Mr. Khalil Gharios, Acting Assistant Director at (213) 485-2210.

Attachments

ECZ:GH:AH:vg

