

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: January 21, 2020

TO: Honorable Nury Martinez, Chair
Honorable Paul Koretz, Vice Chair
Honorable Paul Krekorian, Member
Honorable Gil Cedillo, Member
Honorable Mitch O'Farrell, Member
Energy, Climate Change, and Environmental Justice Committee

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

**SUBJECT: LA SANITATION AND ENVIRONMENT REPORT BACK ON THE CITY'S
COMPREHENSIVE CLEANING AND RAPID ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM (CF#14-
1499-S7,14-1499-S8, CF 19-0600-S89,19-0600-S156, 19-0609)**

In July of 2019, the City Council passed a new sanitation deployment plan, which called for the creation of the Comprehensive Cleaning and Rapid Engagement (CARE) program to address long-standing issues in the City's street-level response to homeless encampments, and expanded LA Sanitation and Environment's (LASAN) workforce by adding 47 new hires dedicated to improving public health conditions at encampments. The CARE program officially launched citywide on October 1, 2019 and represented a shift in the City's efforts to address public health and unsheltered homelessness. It also represented a significant expansion of public health and sanitation resources. The goal of the CARE program is to maintain cleaner and healthier public spaces across the City, and to do so while carefully balancing the needs of all Angelenos. Under the CARE program, outreach workers from the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) are now embedded with LASAN personnel in the field and Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) officers are deployed geographically and in close proximity to the teams. The shift to the CARE program represented an important alignment of previously fragmented programs and initiatives and is one of the first City-operated programs of its kind in the nation.

The program encountered challenges in its first months, including communication, coordination, and decision-making in the field. LASAN also heard concerns about the program directly from Council offices. Since then, LASAN and its partners have gained important insights and experience and have made a number of changes and introduced additional tools to better support the program. These changes and additional tools are described in more detail below.

On December 3, 2019, LASAN provided a progress report on the CARE program to the City Council's Energy, Climate Change, and Environmental Justice (ECCEJ) Committee. At that meeting, the Committee expressed a number of concerns about the program and requested LASAN report back in January with its efforts to address the enumerated concerns.

This report addresses the specific instructions given to LASAN on December 3rd by the Committee. It also responds directly to feedback received from other City Council offices following the launch of CARE in October of 2019.

VISUAL CLEANLINESS AND PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS

The sanitation and hygiene component of the CARE program is managed by LASAN's Livability Services Division (LSD). The LSD is also the lead division within LASAN for maintaining the public right of way. This is primarily accomplished through enforcement of Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) 56.11, which governs the storage of private property in public spaces. Based on feedback from the Committee and other Council offices, in particular about the need to more effectively enforce LAMC 56.11, LASAN worked with the Mayor's Office, LAPD, and LAHSA to make important changes to the CARE program.

Beginning on January 21, 2020, the CARE program will fully implement the following program adjustments citywide, which are intended to achieve cleaner public spaces and more passable sidewalks:

- The CARE program will make illegal dumping teams available seven (7) days a week to ensure that trash and debris do not build up over the weekend, within existing resources.
- Both CARE and CARE+ teams will be able to post, authorize, and conduct comprehensive clean-ups with 24-hours advance notice. Previously, only CARE+ teams performed this function. This change will ensure the City's approach is right-sized for the location. CARE teams will be used to conduct comprehensive cleanings at smaller illegal dumping sites or locations with smaller encampments. Larger and chronic illegal dumping sites and locations with larger encampments will continue to be addressed by CARE+ teams. Council offices will play a key role in determining which approach is needed at which site.
- Every CARE and CARE+ team will fully enforce LAMC 56.11 at every location they visit. Compliance means that tents will be down between 6am to 9pm daily, that sidewalks will have at least 36 inches of passable space, and that prohibited items, such as bulky items and biohazards, will be impounded and disposed of according to law and policy.
- LAPD Homeless Outreach and Proactive Engagement (HOPE) officers, which have to date been deployed in a "zone defense" model, will be pre-deployed along with CARE teams at sites with documented histories of escalation or aggressive or confrontational behavior. The LAPD's primary role will remain ensuring the safety of all CARE team members and unhoused Angelenos
- LASAN and LAPD will conduct operations on City property owned or operated by the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP), with RAP operational teams no longer needed on site, ensuring greater coverage of parks across the City through interdepartmental coordination.
- LSD staff, CARE team members, including LAHSA outreach workers, and UHRC staff will receive ongoing training on LAMC 56.11 and other relevant laws and City policies.

Additionally, City and agency leadership will support these changes in the following manner:

- The Mayor's Chief of Homelessness Operations and Street Strategies is now directing the City's Unified Homelessness Response Center (UHRC); is coordinating citywide street strategies and initiatives, including the CARE program; and is working to hold City departments and LAHSA accountable for implementing adjustments to the CARE program and enforcing the law, as well as carrying out Mayor and Council priorities. Because the CARE program is an interagency effort, it requires leadership from someone other than a department general manager. This person must be able to direct and oversee program operations and be in a position to hold general managers, department staff, and LAHSA accountable. The Mayor's Office is uniquely positioned to hold such a leadership position.
- LASAN has reintegrated its Community Services Group (CSG) into the CARE scheduling process to ensure Council offices' priorities are reflected in the deployment of CARE and CARE+ teams. Representatives from CSG now serve as direct liaisons between Council offices, LASAN, and the UHRC. With the reintegration of CSG, Council offices will have complete control over which locations are visited by their CARE teams, and how frequently these sites are visited. Council offices will also control the scheduling for the vast majority of CARE+ operations and illegal dumping collection.
- The City Attorney's office has provided all CARE teams with comprehensive additional training on LAMC 56.11 and other relevant laws and City regulations. This will help to ensure that LASAN personnel understand how to fully enforce the law and LAHSA outreach workers understand how they can help educate unsheltered residents about how to comply with the law.
- The Mayor's Office and departmental leadership have made it clear to all CARE teams that the final determination in the field about what materials will be impounded, what will be stored, and what will be disposed of shall be made by Environmental Compliance Inspectors. Accordingly, LSD will maintain rigorous oversight and supervision of all CARE field operations.
- The Mayor's Office hired a new UHRC Regional Coordinator, who will be providing additional oversight of field activities, and who will embed with CARE teams to ensure their operations meet the standards of the program and Mayor and Council expectations.

PROGRAM FUNDING

For reference, here is a historical look at funding that the City has provided LASAN for its operations:

	2014-15 Adopted	2015-16 Adopted	2016-17 Adopted	2017-18 Adopted	2018-19 Adopted	2019-20 Adopted
Total Funding	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 9,464,476	\$ 10,607,067	\$ 32,686,810	\$ 30,336,036	\$ 38,698,214

PROGRAM JUSTIFICATION

The Committee instructed LASAN to provide justification for continuing the CARE program. Like many new programs, the CARE program encountered challenges with implementation as LASAN moved quickly to fill positions and rapidly scale up operations, and embed other agencies in its work.

Since October 1st, the CARE program has doubled the number of cleanup operations performed by the City each month, from an average of 800 operations monthly in FY 2018-19, to now more than 1,600 operations monthly. The CARE mobile hygiene units also provide hundreds of showers each month to individuals in need of access to basic hygiene infrastructure. LASAN is optimistic that the changes outlined above will help ensure there is less trash in the public right of way and cleaner public spaces.

The primary role of LASAN in the CARE program is to improve the cleanliness of City streets and the public right of way while its partners, at LAHSA and across the City and County, work diligently to end the homelessness crisis. The programmatic adjustments described above will result in a stronger and more focused approach. This clearer approach toward cleanliness, with flexibility, will allow the City to respond to the complex challenges of unsheltered homelessness while also being responsive to the needs of our housed neighbors. LASAN believes the CARE program, with the changes described above, provides the clearest path to clean and healthy conditions on our streets, and looks forward to working closely with the Committee to continue improving the program.

Thank you in advance for your continued support of LASAN and the CARE program. If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of these items further, please feel free to contact me or Jose P. Garcia, Assistant Director, at (213) 485-2210.

cc: Members of the City Council
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