

POLICY MOTION

COMMITTEE: PH&S Homeless Committee

TITLE: Request LA Council Member Traci Park to implement the provisions of LAMC 41.18 regarding the Venice Blvd./Globe/405 Underpass Encampment.

PURPOSE: For newly elected CD11 LA Council Member, Traci Park and the City of Los Angeles to address the health and safety concerns of the stakeholders, residents and businesses impacted by the homeless encampment at Venice Blvd./Globe/405 Underpass.

BACKGROUND:

The homeless encampment at Venice Blvd./Globe/405 Freeway underpass has been tolerated by the community around it for years. Over time, however, the Venice Blvd./Globe encampment has grown and become a permanent fixture with city installed showers and porta potties and an attendant. But there is no oversight to ensure the safety or health impact on the nearby residents/families that have to deal with the trash, crime and drug related activities that exist at the Venice encampment. There are no regularly scheduled Department of Sanitation trash or debris pick in the area. The northside Venice Blvd. sidewalk in this area is completely blocked by the encampment, trash, and debris. This is a violation of city as well as ADA laws and constitutes a public nuisance. Pedestrians are forced to risk their lives and go into oncoming vehicular traffic to walk around the encampment. Motor vehicles heading west on Venice Blvd. must move out of the curb lane to avoid an accident as the lane is more often than not blocked by trash and other bulky items. It's time for the city to address the safety and health concerns of the community and do something about this encampment. Attached to this motion are two emails and a flyer that illustrate stakeholder concerns regarding this situation.

THE MOTION:

Request LA City Council Member Traci Park to implement the appropriate provisions of LAMC 41.18, regarding the homeless encampment at Venice Blvd./Globe/405 underpass and address the health and safety concerns of stakeholders, residents and businesses impacted by the homeless encampment at this location.

DIRECTED TO:

LA City Council Member Traci Park, CD11

ACTION/VOTE COUNT:

Yeas: 11

Nays: 2

Abstentions: 0

Subject: Response Requested to our growing concerns regarding the Venice Blvd Homeless Encampment under the 405

Date: Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 6:31:11 AM Pacific Standard Time

From: [REDACTED]

To: traci.park@lacity.org <traci.park@lacity.org>, gabriela.medina@lacity.org <gabriela.medina@lacity.org>, Clint Carlton <clint.carlton@lacity.org>

CC: [REDACTED]

Dear City Council Team-

I wanted to share a few findings (and questions) that I think are critical to the discussion regarding the growing encampment under the 405 (on Venice Blvd between Globe and Tuller).

Over the weekend a group of my neighbors (myself included) conducted a 2.5 hour cleanup on Globe Ave, the alley behind the shopping center on the North Side of Venice (between Globe and Sawtelle) and also on Venice (both intersections with Globe). Spending significant time there unveiled a few things.

1. A drug den - 3765 Globe Ave is a vacant home, completely boarded up and fenced. The gated entry was wide open, so there's no point in the fence, because anyone can access the property. As a result - the front yard is littered with trash. I personally pulled over 20 beer/liquor bottles out of the tree in front of the house. **It is a very large overgrown tree, and it needs to be cut back or cut down.** This is the last home on Globe, adjacent to the alley, and closest to the encampment. In the alley, directly connected to the home, we found over 20 used needles. Which my neighbors and I carefully disposed of. We need a real solution for that home. The owner likely is unable to sell it or complete it because of the encampment, it's a vicious cycle.

Further - it is my understanding that drugs are basically being delivered to under the 405 with suppliers coming directly to their customers under the 405.

2. The corners of Venice and Globe (both corners) have sewer drains. The drains have traps on top to prevent litter from getting into the sewage system. The traps have been pushed in, and the sewer drains were filled with litter. Truly nothing more than a simple push would prevent cups, carpets, needles, clothing, and more from going down the drain.

3. The litter in the street on Venice Blvd under the 405 has not been picked up in several weeks. As a result the trash has now moved into the bike lane and beyond. There's nowhere else for the litter to go, except to expand out to our blocks. As a result of the growing litter and population, we found several sleeping arrangements spreading beyond the overpass. We spoke to one young man who was sleeping behind the dry cleaner on Venice. He was clearly having a drug induced episode. Nonetheless, he was kind and apologetic, and shared that he needed help and had nowhere to go.

Furthermore - we found pieces of carpets laid out on Globe for sleeping arrangements and we couldn't even get to Tuller because the unhoused folks on that side have been protective of their space and we're concerned for our safety. If you look at Tuller you can see what the future holds for myself and my neighbors on Globe if we do not have the ability to protect our space.

In this note, I've pointed to drug treatment, drug distribution, sanitation, drainage, public health and public safety issues - all stemming from one encampment. It is not possible for myself and my neighbors to bear the responsibility or the repercussions for these 6 very large issues. We need action against all of the above. It can not be treated with one off solutions. This requires a task force, with clear deliverables, deadlines and accountability. This will not work in any other way.

We can see this clearly based on the city provided porta potties. While I can appreciate that the city has created a solution to bodily waste, it has also attracted more of the unhoused to this location.

We have seen people who think they are helping, come by and drop off clothing - we then end up picking these water logged pieces of clothing as they become trash and fill the sewer line

You can't give people a free pass to live under the bridge, and not feed them. Last week, my husband pulled up video of someone going through our trash and eating (very old, very very old) pizza out of our trash can. So I should not have been surprised to find another piece of MY trash down the block during our clean up efforts. A thank you note, from a gift we bought during the holidays. I felt personally violated. Who knows what parts of my trash has ended up under this overpass. We need an overall solution to this several year old problem.

Lastly - I wanted to share that even though I live here, I did not have a true understanding of how deep and troubling this issue is until we conducted a cleanup. **I am requesting that members of your team and the city join us on a clean up in the next 6 to 8 weeks so that you can see for yourself.** While we HEAR you, that there are efforts in place, and that there's a plan that is being pulled together - it truly needs to be witnessed and experienced first hand. This costs you nothing but time, won't require a large bureaucratic process and would be an important way to help me and my neighbors to believe that there's real commitment to a solution.

In response to this note, I am requesting a few follow ups:

1. Please share the date of the next sanitation cleanup under the 405. Please also share the cadence of this cleanup - which should be weekly at least.
2. Please share what immediate steps can be taken to remove or cut back the tree [REDACTED]
3. Please share your thoughts on potential dates when members of the City Council team can join us for a cleanup - we are not asking you to do anything we won't do ourselves

Lastly I am sharing a small slideshow with pictures and videos from this weekend's cleanup ([Link Here](#)). I am aware that some of my other neighbors have reached out, but it is important that you see all of what we saw and experienced this weekend. I am asking you to take this seriously, prioritize us, please give us more than a cursory glance. If you're tired of hearing from us, imagine how we must feel. **I truly expect more than a canned response to this note. I've spent hours cleaning, collecting data and pulling this together and I'd like a thoughtful and actionable response.**

Thank you,
[REDACTED]

Subject: Fw: Globe_Venice Blvd Situation Part 1
Date: Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 1:36:25 PM Pacific Standard Time
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]

Attachments: Aniyas intruder.-Dec 9-22JPEG copy.JPG, 1Tuller_dec_23_2022.JPG, 2Tuller_dec_23_2022.JPG, 3Tuller_dec_23_2022.JPG, 4Tuller_dec_23_2022.JPG

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: [REDACTED]
To: Traci Park <traci@tracipark.com>; "jamie.paige@lacity.org" <jamie.paige@lacity.org>
Cc: [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, December 30, 2022 at 05:22:06 PM PST
Subject: Globe_Venice Blvd Situation Part 1

Hello Traci,

First of all congratulations on winning the council position. Our neck of the woods looks forward to positive changes under your direction.

We love that you have committed to be a responsive representative to our beloved community and have put forth CD11's safety foremost in mind with deserved support for our local first responders and police officers - unlike your totally hands-off predecessor. The promise of a safe and clean environment is foremost on my community's mind as well.

"I promised that I would get to work on day one to make sure our parks and public spaces are clean, safe places for residents in my district," Park said. "I also made a commitment to generate new practices linked to measurable and successful outcomes. Today we started that work and will continue to do so." Your statement gives our little corner of Mar Vista a lot of hope.

Please forgive the length of this letter, but it all has to be said and documented because it has been a long time this corner of Mar Vista has been heard.

High Risk Against Safety:

One of the biggest issues in our District are the homeless encampments and the obstructive and unsafe conditions they create. Every single day it continues to be a magnet for illegal dumpers, thieves, drug abusers and drug dealers. Many encampments (Grandview northwest of Venice behind Yum Yum Donuts, Grandview Post Office and Mar Vista Library-after a fire had to be put out on Venice in front of it) have been cleared while the encampment in our neighborhood, adjacent to Venice and the 405 freeway, continues to grow! It's going on 9 years with absolutely no abatement in sight. My neighbors and myself do not understand why the smaller tent occupied parking lots and sidewalks are cleared, but the most dangerous of them all - the 405 tent city is allowed to remain! None of the others have been as dangerous as this encampment. I have heard from some of the street people that this is a primary source for fentanyl

laced meth sales. While this camp is allowed to exist, the lives of those under it are always at risk from overdose or death from violent encounters, including rape. Throughout the years I've heard from several women who lived there that they've been physically and sexually assaulted. Homeless and resident safety is always in question. The homeowners next to this will always be targets for theft, trespassing, harassment and assault.

Chronic Sanitation Issue:

We've long tolerated the refuse blowing onto our lawns and driveways. Every Thursday, some organization of people take over Globe Ave to bring items to the homeless. That would be fine except this group contributes to the lack of community considerate standards we have to deal with. I've had my driveway blocked almost every week. The food bringers don't provide bins for food waste, paper plates and food wrappers they give to the homeless. Those used items do not go in the trash bins provided on Venice Blvd; They are thrown in the street and blow onto our properties. Every week I have to pick up their garbage from my lawn and even my front door. People with a true sense of "community" would be aware and active in reducing the negative impact of their actions by cleaning up after their food giveaway after they feed the 405 homeless folks.

The amount of debris from this camp is astounding. LASAN provisions for trash is not enough. The City's infrequent clean-up and massive piles of garbage on Venice Blvd proves they have been unable to keep up. The encampments that have mentally incapacitated people or drug abusers show this particular degree of trash around their tents. Every week, the junk piles up on Venice Blvd. to the point that many residents can't safely turn the corner into their own home block. We continue to be at the mercy of people who do not respect this community. Our area harbors an extremely unhealthy, unsafe environment under the 405 bridge. Another important consideration is that the rodent population has exploded in our area... It's demoralizing to be denied help by gov. entities every week, for years!

Priority For Safety Must Be Addressed:

The encampment is overcrowded and is constantly overflowing from the 405 underpass into neighborhood streets on both sides of the freeway. The owners of RVs illegally parked on Tuller Ave dump their refuse onto the street. Bio-waste is released on a residential street with no repercussions. Some of the homeless people are hostile to pedestrians if you look at them. Residents, such as myself, are threatened when we request they stop dumping trash or stepping onto our properties. They show no regard for the law when they keep cutting the freeway fence on both Tuller and Globe. They drag illegally dumped furniture up the street. I've had to make calls to a construction company to reclaim their stolen materials (construction fences, wooden pallets) before they are dismantled and used as makeshift shacks and placed inside the fenced planted zone. This lack of respect towards our neighborhood, the ceaseless efforts to invade the freeway planted zone across our homes is alarming. At least 11 fires have broken out in the 405 homeless encampment in the past, so, we fear what will happen if they set up camp inside the planted zone.

You may recall we've had at least half a dozen shootings at this encampment. One shooting is way too many. This camp also harbored a killer. Dylan Brumley lived here for almost two years before he killed one of the truly vulnerable members of our community - an elderly man, 71 year old Jesus Valdivia. Brumley was always under the influence of some drug, maybe meth, some days setting fire to objects and clothes in the alley.

Drug dealers are here everyday! They park in the middle of our street to try and evade detection from law enforcement. I live within 500 feet from the corner of Venice and Globe and I hear them come as late as 2-4am. They don't care how loud they are. The noise from their vehicles or motorcycles wake me up after midnight. Some of my neighbors and I have seen Pacific Division Detectives make arrests. I know this is not occasional. The incident of a neighbor being harassed by thugs (likely drug sellers) from behind the wheel of their cars on our street is still an upsetting memory. Three carloads harassed one lone woman in her vehicle in the middle of the day. We live next to a dangerous drug trafficking zone and are tired of living in fear for our safety. No one in our neighborhood will risk walking Venice Blvd. next to this encampment. Please, find a way to dismantle this encampment before the next violent encounter occurs.

I'm trying to convey the degree of defensive bracing we are are chronically placed in. We cannot live in

peace. I come home at midnight from work in Pasadena and I always have to high beam my driveway to make sure no one is there or in the side passage of my home. I can't just get out of my car and walk to my front door in peace. No, I have to look up and down my street to check if non resident cars have occupants in them or if there is anyone loitering near my home or on my neighbor's property before I get out of my car. I'm two houses away from the alley and I'm constantly looking over my shoulder. The risk is only 500 feet from where I live and has existed everyday for 9 years. It's disheartening because not everyone (even in this district or adjacent Culver City) lives like this, lives in constant high alert like we have to! We've had enough.

Culver City Council is going to enact an ordinance that prohibits camping on public places. This ordinance is scheduled for January 23, 2023 similar to one in place in the City of Santa Monica. According to Culver City's program, "The proposed ordinance will identify public places, such as public parks, public buildings, public parking lots, public streets and sidewalks, and public landscaped areas where camp facilities are prohibited." This will lead to those unsheltered persons from Culver City who refuse direction and services to invade our residential street on the north side of Venice Blvd. in Los Angeles, which is already choked to the brim with tents. Every home up for sale on our block attracts, particularly aggressive, homeless individuals from the 405 encampment who WILL attempt to set up camp on our streets. It's a constant vigilance because it has happened before. This brings down the quality of life for everyone in the community. We are already dealing with homeless individuals setting up camp on private property on Globe Ave. Just this month December 2022, we've had car break-ins and people climbing into neighbors yards in the middle of the night looking for things to steal. We can't have this anymore!

Los Angeles already has an ordinance - 41.18. We need the district to enforce it. This encampment ticks off every safety and health risk under 41.18. I understand the ordinance was modified to "prevent encampments that are a hazard to public health and safety". The 405 freeway encampment qualifies in spades.

Since 2014, we've been asking to be heard by the City. Because of the unpredictable and always negative nature of this situation, it must be a priority for our district to protect its constituents. There are people in the 405/Venice encampment incapable of making reasonable, community centered choices, either for their own welfare or longtime residents. This is evident by the conditions created in this encampment. There is no question this situation needs intervention. Application of city codes of safety, that all citizens are obliged to abide by, such as ADA compliant clear sidewalks and enforcement of existing health codes, must be applied to protect everyone's health and safety.

I met you at a neighbor's backyard and I liked your energy and viewpoints and hoped you would win the council seat. I'm glad your constituents now have the opportunity to correspond with you and be heard on safety matters. Our plight needs your attention. Only someone in your position of authority can truly do something about it. I know you have a full plate coming in as Councilwoman and my neighbors and I are so glad you are at the helm of District 11. I trust you have several ideas in the works concerning the homeless situation, but, I want to emphasize that this particular homeless entrenchment has been one of the highest risk encampments in the Westside for over 9 years and has never been addressed in any meaningful way.

Thank you for reading this letter on behalf of all the residents impacted by the 405 encampment.

Esmeralda

Resident of the partnership between Globe, Tuller, Sawtelle concerned for a safe, healthy community and higher quality of life.

VISUAL EVIDENCE:

A Globe neighbor's camera captured an intruder on her alley carport Dec 9, 2022.



The following are photos and video from the encampment on Tuller Ave/Venice/405 underpass December 2022.

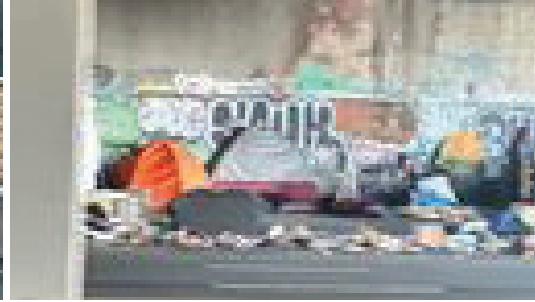
This is the state of Tuller Ave. on December 23 2022, the residential and business section AFTER LA Sanitation came to “clean” the street of refuse and garbage. It’s a never-ending dump-land and LASAN always backs out with the excuse that the dirty unused mattresses, sofas, broken chairs are homeless” property”. It’s very frustrating to deal with City entities that do not support our efforts for a safe and clean environment. It’s ridiculous the runaround we are put through. Please note the invasion of RV’s and trailers illegally parked on Tuller Ave. Even though this is no part of District 11, it’s a sample of what we will deal with on Globe Ave. because of this common problem under the 405.







THE UNDERPASS ON VENICE BLVD., BETWEEN SAWTELLE AND SEPULVEDA IS A CRISIS FOR EVERYONE. TRAFFIC LANES FULL OF TRASH, PEOPLE LIVING IN VERY UNSANITARY AND DANGEROUS CONDITIONS. WE NEED IMMEDIATE HELP FROM OUR CITY.



The campers need better living conditions and help is needed for anyone with issues. The local community is asking for your help with cleaning up this terrible situation for all involved. This underpass needs to be cleaned up. Trash is now taking up a whole lane on both sides, as well as sidewalks being blocked. Please address this situation.

