

ARLETA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL: COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

June 21, 2022

RE: *In Opposition Council File Motion 22-0158*

Dear Councilmembers:

We write to you to inform that the Arleta Neighborhood Council **opposes** Council File Motion **22-0158** and any derivative of this motion going forward where it *permits* homeless shelters to become *by-right* projects that will prevent public opposition to even be considered let alone notification to the impacted taxpaying citizenry and communities. The City of Los Angeles through its political leadership has failed the City of Los Angeles and has both permitted and encouraged the development of homeless projects to move forward over the rights of the citizenry even if it attacks hard-working taxpayers' private properties and neighborhoods by creating an environment, *but not limited to*, of:

- Homicides
- High crime and petty crime
- Open air drug usage
- Sexual orgies in full public view
- Defecation in full public view
- Exchange of gunfire
- Sites of domestic violence
- Unlawful possession of firearms
- Stabbings
- Kidnappings
- Assaults and intimidation of minors and adults
- Harassment and sexual harassment of both minors and adults
- Rapes or attempted rapes of women and female/male minors
- Encampments adjacent to schools and child/senior day care centers
- Encampments at public parks (e.g. Brand Park, Tobias Park)
- Burglaries and thefts from: vehicles, homes, apartment units, commercial/industrial/public/private properties
- Trafficking of narcotics
- Contamination of both public and private property through defecation, urination, and illegal dumping or possession and unlawful discharge of hazardous waste and chemicals
- Illegal dumping
- Arson activity and intentional incineration of both public and private properties
- Accumulation of disabled automobiles and/or Residential Vehicles (RV) and abandonments and/or incinerations of the same
- Electricity theft

Except for Councilmembers Joe Buscaino and Mike Bonin, none of the elected officials have spoken out against other municipalities that have pushed *their homeless* into the City of Los Angeles.¹ But only Councilmember Buscaino has actually both protected and defended the taxpaying citizenry in the streets and from within the horseshoe. Angeleno taxpayers can clearly see that other cities such as Burbank,

¹ <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-los-angeles-homeless-neighboring-cities-sidewalk-lawsuit-20190605-story.html>

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Culver City, Santa Monica, Pasadena, Beverly Hills, Alhambra, and South Pasadena—among many others—do not have the degree of homelessness chaos that the City of Los Angeles has. Why is that? Those other cities also have expensive market rate rentals and people becoming homeless but we get to deal with the 41,290 homeless individuals (according to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) 2020 count).² In West Los Angeles, the Interstate 10 freeway underpass at Centinela Avenue /Pico Boulevard, Figures 1 and 2 show homeless encampments on the City of Los Angeles side while across Centinela Avenue (right side of the photograph in Figure 1) the City of Santa Monica has no encampments whatsoever.



Figure 1. West Los Angeles at underpass of the Interstate 10 freeway at Centinela Avenue and Pico Blvd. Homeless encampments highlighted. Source: Arleta Neighborhood Council. Date: June 5, 2022.



Figure 2. Closer view of homeless encampments on City of Los Angeles side. Underpass of Interstate 10 freeway at Centinela Avenue and Pico Blvd. Source: Arleta Neighborhood Council. Date: June 5, 2022.

² <https://www.lahsa.org/documents?id=4558-2020-greater-los-angeles-homeless-count-presentation>

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Figure 3. Location of homeless encampments at Interstate 10 freeway underpass at Centinela Avenue and Pico Boulevard in West Los Angeles and Santa Monica city limits. Source: Arleta Neighborhood Council. Date: June 5, 2022

Furthermore, nonprofit organizations/homeless advocacy groups, and religious institutions that operate or offer services to the unsheltered do not necessarily have its personnel residing within the City of Los Angeles. It is also unlikely that the elected class will remain living within the City of Los Angeles and raise families adjacent to, across the street from, or anywhere in the vicinity of a homeless shelter/service provider in the foreseeable future; especially when elected officials are more transient than homeowners and other property owners. It also has to be stated that some of the facilities with contracts or funding sources to provide homeless services are also adjacent to R1 or other low density zoning neighborhoods as in the case of Arleta.

The community of Arleta became a host of a Project Homekey site **without its consultation and without its approval** at 9120 N Woodman Avenue, Arleta prior to December 2020. The immediate neighbors and community members *did not approve of this project nor want it* as families with children purchased their homes or moved into the targeted neighborhood **prior** to a homeless shelter being installed at 9120 N Woodman Avenue. We do not want this homeless shelter there nor anywhere in any community that does not want it and the motion before us purports to expand and make permanent what we as taxpayers did not vote on nor approve of; Figure 4 illustrates the location of the Project Homekey site in Arleta.

In the words of directly impacted residents:

We were told by City officials [of council district 6] that this development was going forward [as] a number of Arleta area residents and Arleta Neighborhood Council members attended a PR meeting held **at** the [9120 Woodman Avenue facility back in May 2021]. When officials from the organization that has been contracted to run this facility introduced themselves and then proceeded to answer some rather pointed questions from residents of our concerned community.

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Specific questions arose about how entry security would be monitored for the sake of keeping this facility orderly and for the security of other residents there. We were told *outrightly* that there would be a visible guard at the front door, **but that the security person would NOT be checking residents from coming into the facility with contraband (alcohol, drugs or weapons of any kind.)**

Also of deep concern is that there would be no security oversight to ensure that residents in this mixed-gender facility were not breaking into the rooms of other residents and intimidating them, stealing from them [,or worse]. THESE two blatantly irresponsible risk factors were alone enough to convince many of us that this kind of running of the facility would have the potential to create a lawless environment to have in proximity to our residential community.

Another issue, we have been told numerous times that the City would begin enforcing ordinances to guarantee that no off-site homeless encampments would be allowed around the facility. [And] that parking enforcement would be instituted to [ensure] that junk vehicles and trailers would not be allowed to be parked on the streets around this facility. The City saw to it that an encampment and that violating vehicles were removed prior to the community meeting that they were promoting. Subsequent to that, the City has not enforced junk-vehicle parking around this facility [or very seldomly]. [Why would we] now have any confidence that this facility will not become a poorly-run and unsafe eyesore in our mostly residential community? Therefore we are in opposition *to this imposed plan* moving forward in our area.

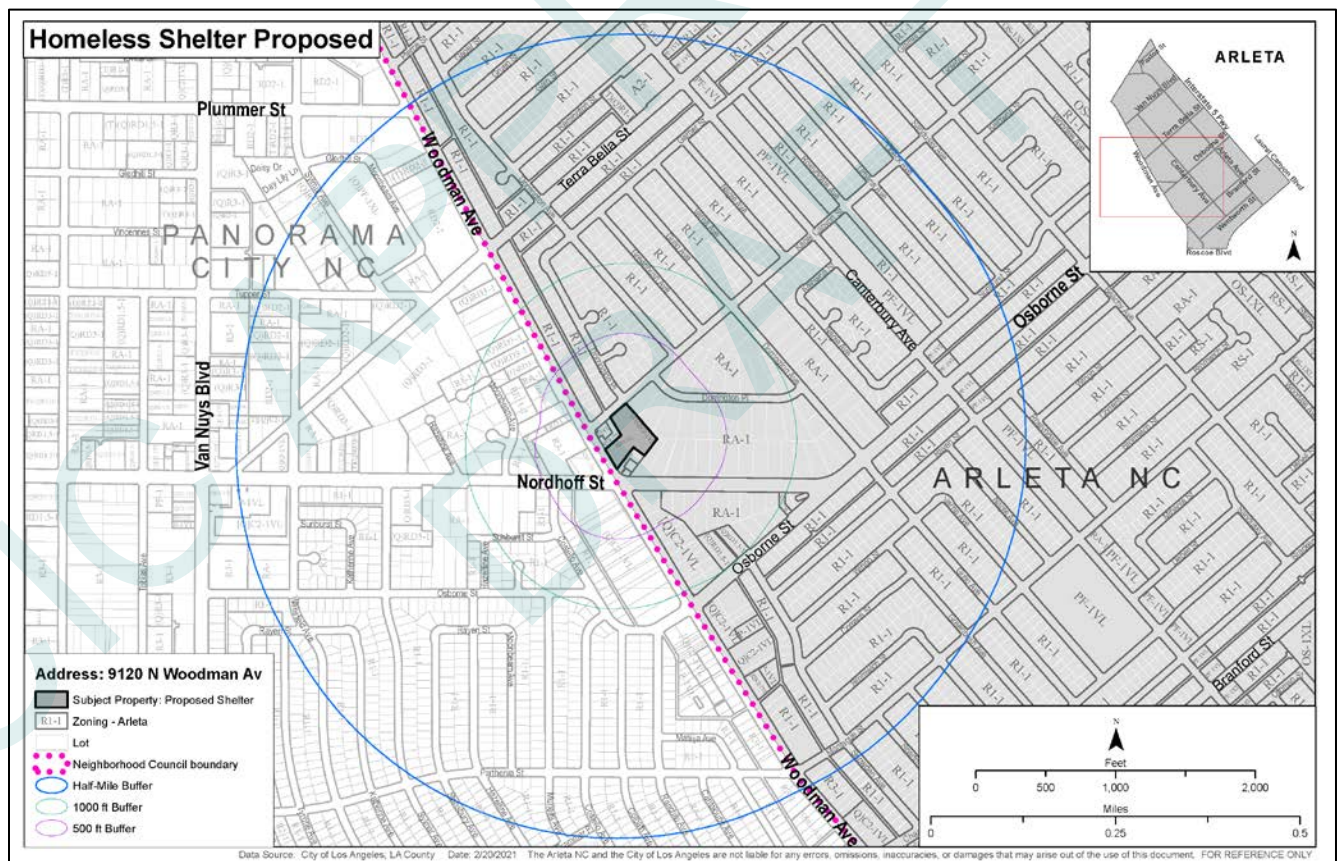


Figure 4. Proposed homeless shelter at 9120 N Woodman Avenue, Arleta. The community of Arleta and the Arleta Neighborhood Council were never consulted of this project and neither did either of the aforementioned approve of this project beforehand. Date: February 20, 2021.

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In the City Administrative Officer's Fifth Report on COVID-19 Homelessness Roadmap Funding Recommendations, or report 20-0841 with CAO File No. 0220-05734-0014, dated March 18, 2021, page 17 states "this report also recommends the National Health Foundation as the owner/operator of the Woodman Homekey site at 9120 Woodman Avenue, and requests that LAHSA execute a contract with the National Health Foundation for the previously approved \$3,825,250 in ESG-COVID (\$397,200 for rehabilitation and \$3,428,050 for operations through June 30, 2022)"³ At no point in time was the Arleta NC ever notified of this major transaction prior to its execution. Voters' property and security values have significantly been injured by this City of Los Angeles transaction while its elected officials will move on to other political or private assignments and yet this community will be left behind ***holding the bag of this unwanted transaction and violation of property owners' rights***. It is very easy for the elected class to approve of such sites when they will not be the ones living adjacent to or in the vicinity of these homeless shelters. The nearly \$3.5 million dollar transaction could have been better used to construct much cheaper temporary double-insulated aluminum climate-controlled tents ***away from the city*** (and all other cities) in remote locations in Los Angeles County where homeless patients experiencing trauma and substance abuse dependencies can continue to obtain the necessary treatment and graduate to permanent housing as they turn their lives around and become productive members of society by meeting exit criteria.⁴

Finally, using city owned lots to convert or build homeless shelters means that the shelters would be introduced and become **permanent in communities that never asked for them, were not consulted, nor desired a homeless shelter when commercial, residential, and industrial property owners purchased or moved into a targeted community decades ago**. There is plenty of undeveloped land where hangars or climate-controlled tents ***can be built cheaply and temporarily outside the City of Los Angeles*** and miles away from other municipalities as well while providing full envelope homeless services. Moreover, sidewalks and alleys where homeless services facilities are presently located within industrial and commercial zones have proven to be grounds for social/environmental disasters of the type that taxpayers have feared for decades; that alone is proof that the City of Los Angeles is *all talk and no walk*. However, if homeless individuals are not expected to adhere to rehabilitation criteria or should they continue to abuse substances and not become productive members of society then all of the taxpayer money used to house and rehabilitate them will have been in vain and that is both abuse and theft of taxpayer money. Taxpayers expect a positive return for their hard-earned money and they do have far reaching memories when it comes time to the ballot box.

Given the preponderance of the evidence, Council File Motion 22-0158 grossly impacts Arleta and all communities in the City of Los Angeles, therefore, the Arleta Neighborhood Council opposes Council File Motion 22-0158 and derivatives of this motion and it requests that the City Council oppose this abuse of both public and private properties and this breach of the public's trust.

Respectfully,

The Arleta Neighborhood Council

³ https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2020/20-0841_rpt_cao_03-18-2021.pdf

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/mar/29/san-diego-homelessness-big-tents>

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