

**CITY OF WHITTIER  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 28, 2019**

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**HEALTH AND SAFETY CLEAN-UP AT PARNELL PARK**

The City of Whittier remains a compassionate community with a heart for service, including to those members of our community who are experiencing homelessness. We wholeheartedly agree that it is not healthy nor safe for individuals to live on our streets and open spaces areas, and we agree that housing, coupled with supportive services, is the best solution for those that lack a home.

As part of our efforts to address the plight of homeless individuals in our community we have adopted a Homeless Action Plan that reiterates our goals for ending homelessness in Whittier. Some of the programs and activities that are already well-established in our community include:

- Women's and Children's Crisis Shelter (Salvation Army Hospitality House)
- Whittier First Day Coalition
- The Whole Child
- Whittier Police Department's Mental Health Evaluation Team
- Whittier Library Veterans Resource Center

We have been working with our local and regional partners on outreach, engagement, and resources for individuals who are in encampments in our community. We are aware that health and safety conditions are lacking in some of these areas, and we are actively coordinating clean-ups to help preserve the health and welfare of individuals who are in these areas as well as those throughout our community.

After months of engagement at Parnell Park and two weeks of intensive outreach by our social services and homeless services partners, a notice of clean-up has been posted at Parnell Park. This notice is effective on April 11, 12, and 13, 2019 to allow for necessary sanitation, safety and maintenance work to be undertaken. The work will focus on repairs, sanitary clean-up, debris removal, and restoration of the picnic area at the park. In light of the Martin v. Boise case and other legal constraints, this action is not an encampment clearance. We may continue to see homeless individuals throughout our community, including in our parks, until there are sufficient shelter beds and housing available for all of the homeless individuals in our community. The City remains committed to addressing this issue so those experiencing homelessness are no longer without the opportunity to avail themselves of appropriate shelter.

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