

**April 8, 2019**  
**Update on Homelessness in Whittier**

The City continues to make progress in addressing homelessness issues in our community under the “new normal” of the Martin v. Boise case. Last week we added a broad list of Frequently Asked Questions to our City website regarding homelessness; we’ve attempted to address a broad range of issues but please feel free to ask additional questions and we’ll add to the list so everyone benefits from the information.

While there are a substantial number of staff and outside resources involved in providing services, response and cleanup, there is progress on several main efforts:

- 1) The City Council’s Homelessness Ad Hoc Committee met on Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup> and discussed a wide variety of issues. A follow up meeting is scheduled and the committee will be working through various recommendations that will come back to the full Council for consideration and action.
  
- 2) Secondly, with regard to implementation of the Homeless Plan, which has four goals: coordination, increasing awareness, expanding shelter, and efficient use of resources
  - a. The City was recently awarded funding to help us increase coordination of services and efficient use of resources. The funding will allow the City to more closely interact with service providers in our area on outreach and resource-matching for our homeless neighbors
  
  - b. Staff is resubmitting a funding application to help expand the availability of housing through leveraging existing housing stock, engaging with property owners, and potentially a partnership voucher program
  
  - c. Staff also submitted a concept proposal to the Home for Good funders collaborative requesting partners who can help us develop a pro forma for a potential new shelter site
  
- 3) Addressing Encampments:
  - a. At Parnell Park, staff have been working with the Sheriff and LAHSA HET team on extensive outreach and resource coordination. At least three individuals have been placed into safe housing and are receiving case management and other supportive services. The park has been posted for a major cleanup effort that will occur at the park. There will be extensive work by City staff and a certified hazmat contractor to ensure the area is clean and safe.

- b. With regard to the Whittier Blvd. greenbelt area, we're actively working with Caltrans, CHP, our state legislators, County, and our various homeless service providers. Extensive coordinated services and actions to address this area and those living on the site are underway - all of which are aimed at helping individuals receive a broad range of services and appropriate housing placements.

As all of those things are working through, there are a few ways community members can help:

- 1) If you see a crime committed or someone is in immediate danger, please call 911. If you see someone who appears to be homeless and is in need of resources, please go to [LA-hop.org](http://LA-hop.org) to request outreach and assistance for that person.
- 2) If you are a landlord or if you know a landlord, visit [leaseuplosangeles.org](http://leaseuplosangeles.org) to learn more about financial incentives for helping to house veterans, seniors, and families who have experienced homelessness.
- 3) Finally, a nonprofit serving a different part of Los Angeles County has invited local service providers and church leaders to attend a training in May on how to help our homeless neighbors without causing harm. The Whittier Homeless Coalition and Whittier First Day can provide more information about the ways in which local organizations can serve those in our community who are less fortunate in meaningful, long-lasting ways.