

DRAFT

Van Nuys Neighborhood Council
Human Services Committee - Chair, Thela Thatch, Ph.D.
Community Impact Statement Recommendation
RE: Los Angeles City Council File 20-1376
January 6, 2021

Introduction: At the January 6, 2021 meeting of the Human Services Committee, a motion was approved to move forward the recommendation that the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council Board write and submit a Community Impact Statement in support of opposition to amend LA Municipal Codes 41.18 and 56.11 which state that it shall be unlawful for a person to sit, lie or sleep on public property. The following provides the rationale for that recommendation.

Community Impact: Van Nuys Neighborhood Council serves residents of Los Angeles City Council Districts 2, 4, and 6. Each of these districts have significant numbers of residents burdened with chronic homelessness. According to the 2020 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Report, prepared by the Los Angeles Homeless Authority, there are more than 1,400 people who are homeless in CD 6. Among them, 673 are considered chronically homeless. 952 people are without housing in CD 4. Of those, 398 or little less than half are chronically homeless. For CD 2, 1,700 are unhoused with much more than a third, or 742 being chronic.

Statement: We, the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council (VNNC), are requesting that you oppose any legislation that allows the city to ban sitting, sleeping, and lying: within 500 feet of freeways, ramps, and tunnels; within 500 feet of any facility opened after January 2018 that provides housing, shelter, services, safe parking, or storage to unhoused people; or that criminalizes storage of property in the areas listed above. The VNNC strongly opposes this motion, which would displace and criminalize our unhoused neighbors. As the homelessness crisis continues to worsen, exacerbated by a deadly pandemic, the City Council should prioritize tangible solutions. Instead, this motion is inhumane and will make matters worse by forcibly moving unhoused Angelenos from one part of the city to another, disrupting their lives and increasing their interactions with law enforcement and the criminal legal system.

Displacing unhoused people would disrupt their relationships with outreach workers and delays in providing services. Furthermore, the citations, arrests, and fees that would result from the proposed ordinance would create additional impediments to obtaining employment and housing. Furthermore, the City would be taking counterproductive measures in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, endangering the lives of unhoused and housed Angelenos by forcing thousands of unhoused people into smaller areas or jails, in the face of CDC guidance. We understand the desire for clean streets and unobstructed sidewalks. However, criminalizing people because of the City's lack of resources is not the answer. Councilmember Bonin's substitute motion offers an alternative, more productive path. Therefore, the VNNC opposes the draft ordinance amending LAMC 41.18 and 56.11 and ***instead supports the Bonin-Ryu substitute motion.***