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HARBOR GATEWAY NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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May 12, 2021

Councilmember Joe Buscaino
Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson
City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: creation of a Council File for measures to address illegal dumping in the HGNNC and City of Los Angeles

Dear Councilmembers Buscaino and Harris-Dawson:

On May 11, 2021, our Board voted x-x-x to request that you create a Council File which would propose various measures to address the major and continual illegal dumping issues impacting the quality of life in our neighborhoods. As an area impacted by three freeways whose underpasses are magnets for illegal dumping, the issue is a particularly important one to our stakeholders. Besides numerous calls to 311, our stakeholders and other volunteers spend hours every year cleaning up the illegal dumping, only to find the locations returned to the same state a few days later or even overnight.

We have previously requested enforcement and cameras. After reading Controller Ron Galperin's recent report—Piling Up: addressing L.A.'s illegal dumping problem, we request that a Council File be created to study, create, and fund a pilot project to experiment with some of the following solutions.

LASAN should conduct a formal staffing needs assessment to determine how many Environmental Compliance Inspectors and Officers are needed to fully support the unit's investigation, inspection, and emergency response mandates. It should also consider reorganizing the unit to create a section dedicated to emergency response and illegal dumping investigations, and a section dedicated to regulatory inspections of industrial and commercial facilities.

A more robust surveillance camera program targeted on the major illegal dumping sites based on existing service requests

Creation of a coordinated illegal dumping enforcement strategy and working group, with LASAN as the lead agency and coordination with Bureau of Street Services, Department of Building and Safety, LAPD, and the City Attorney's Office. The Department of Building and Safety has reported that unpermitted construction projects and work performed by unlicensed contractors are a source of illegally dumped construction waste. The working group would identify the root causes of illegal dumping, coordination of enforcement activities and case referrals, data sharing, and enhanced enforcement of waste hauling regulations to ensure that businesses and residents properly dispose of waste.

Consideration of increased fines for those found guilty of illegal dumping along with wide-ranging publicity of the prosecution of those found guilty of illegal dumping, especially repeat offenders.

LASAN should reorganize the Environmental Enforcement and Emergency Response Unit. The reorganization should include dedicated units for (1) illegal dumping investigations and other environmental enforcement activities and (2) MS4 industrial and commercial facility inspections. This would include a dedicated, sworn public officer classification for Environmental Compliance Officer positions to improve recruitment and retention.

We also support subsidizing the cost for haulers to dump legally, offering more community dumpster days, free dump days, vouchers for free dumping, and expanded public awareness programs regarding free bulky item pick up, laws regarding illegal dumping and free and low-cost waste disposal services available.

We believe that the cost of these new approaches to illegal dumping would end up being less expensive and more effective in the long run than the approach the City is using now and result in a higher quality of life for all City stakeholders. And we offer our Neighborhood Council area as a test site for these proposed new approaches.

Sincerely,

David Matthews, Chairperson
Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council

cc: Ron Galperin, City Controller
Enrique C. Valdivar, General Manager - LASAN
Caitlin Muldoon, Field Deputy – Council District 15
Albizel Del Valle, Deputy District Director – Council District 8