



Update on the City's Response to *Grants Pass v. Johnson*

Long Beach City Council

May 20, 2025

Grants Pass v. Johnson Decision

- June 28, 2024 – US Supreme Court reverses US 9th Circuit Court decision in *Johnson v. Grants Pass* (9th Cir. 2022)
 - This decision reverses the precedent set in *Martin v. Boise* (9th Cir. 2019), which ruled that enforcement of ordinances restricting camping or sleeping in public spaces without first offering adequate, available shelter options constituted a violation of the US Constitution’s 8th Amendment
- Public Agencies now have discretion to enforce local laws restricting sleeping/camping in public space, regardless of availability of shelter
- This ruling does not mandate any action nor provide additional resources
- Does not impact the City’s Fourth and Fourteenth Amendment requirements for posting or storing personal belongings during Encampment Cleanups

2024 Long Beach Homeless Count

Unsheltered Count



2,455

72.7% Unsheltered

Sheltered Count



921

27.3% Sheltered

Long Beach Homelessness Response

- **Human Centered Approach:** prioritizing proven long-term solutions
 - Outreach and services, shelter, and affordable permanent housing
 - Increasing investments in solutions created by adding additional shelter and permanent housing options
- **Issuing Citations or arrests:** not viewed as a long-term solution
- **Enforcement of anti-camping ordinance:** used as an additional tool when there is a threat to public health or safety



Maintaining Access to Public Resources

Priority Focus Areas: encampments that pose significant and persistent obstruction to the use of public resources

Encampment resolution strategy: intensified outreach, trust-building, offers of shelter and resources, provide notification prior to clearing an area

Enforcement of anti-camping ordinance: is incorporated in this approach, and generally utilized after multiple attempts of outreach has taken place and is issued at LBPD officer discretion

Priority Focus Areas Selection Criteria

- **Priority Focus Areas were identified as encampment(s) that:**
 - Cause significant and persistent obstruction of access to or use of public resources
 - Significant public health or safety concerns, this pertains to both the physical space and the people who reside in the encampment
 - Taking up a significant amount of space relative to the overall space available
 - Quantitative data: homeless services outreach and engagement data and other frontline service data
 - Identified by consistent community and Council Offices input, where other methods of outreach and services have not been effective

Long Beach Homelessness Response

- **Discretion:** Long Beach Police Officers now have discretion to enforce the anti-camping ordinance
 - LBPD remains committed to enforcing against criminal behaviors, not a persons homelessness status
 - Citations or arrests solely for violations of the ordinance are generally coordinated with the Interdepartmental Team and after offers of services have been offered
 - Additional crimes that may be discovered during LBPD responses will be addressed
- **Additional enforcement:** may be utilized to address encampments and individuals in situations of high danger to physical safety
- **Encampment Cleanings:** the Supreme Court Decision does not impact the City's encampment clean-up protocols, including 48-hour notice and storage of personal property

Limitations of Over-Reliance on Criminal Enforcement

- **Criminalization of low-level offenses:** do not address root causes, it causes temporary or short-term relocation and can potentially disrupt continuity of care
- **Underlying causes:** the national and regional crisis is driven by a lack of available affordable housing
- **Wellness considerations:** mental illness, substance use disorders, disabilities, and trauma exacerbate challenges to obtaining housing
- **Repeated citations** may create additional barriers to access employment, services, and housing
- **Increased incarceration:** costly and can create additional future barriers similar to citations



A nighttime photograph of a city skyline with various buildings and palm trees, their lights reflecting in a body of water in the foreground. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title text.

Six-Month Review of Impacts on Citywide Homelessness Response

Engagement and Supportive Services

- **Leading with Services:** The Homeless Services Bureau is focused on connecting people with temporary and permanent housing solutions
- **Increased Coordination:** Mobilization after the Supreme Court decision provided additional opportunity for interdepartmental coordination
- **Priority Focus Areas:** Lasting improvements in Priority Focus Areas resulted from leveraging State and County housing resources, including motel vouchers, housing vouchers, and other programs
- **Homeless Services Bureau:** field-based teams received
 - **3,954** requests for outreach response
 - Provided **2,717** people with services (Jun 2024 – Feb 2025)
 - **1,442** people enrolled in emergency shelter or transitional housing
 - **416** people enrolled in permanent housing programs



Encampment Cleanups

- Public Works (PW) and Parks, Recreation, and Marine (PRM) are responsible for waste disposal and sanitation
- **Coordination:** cleanups are conducted in coordination with Health Department, Police Department, and other relevant City and regional partners
- **Cleanup Protocols:** the Grants Pass decision does not impact overall operations or protocols associated with encampment cleanups
- Priority Focus Areas approach has resulted in marked improvements in cleanliness and accessibility in the four park areas
- **Clean Team and PRM:** Cleanups conducted
 - PW Clean Team conducted **2,019** encampment cleanups, removing **580 tons** of garbage and debris (July 2024 – Feb 2025)
 - PRM Maintenance conducted **359** encampment cleanups, removing **254 tons** of debris (July 2024 – Feb 2025)



Citations and Enforcement

Officer Discretion, Enforcement, and Outcomes:

- LBPD officers exercise discretion and take appropriate action to reduce crime and enhance safety, whether as part of a collaborative interdepartmental response or as an officer dispatched to find solutions to unsafe and unlawful behaviors creating problematic locations in our city.
- Since the Grants Pass Decision, LBPD Officers have enforced applicable laws against individuals who have not engaged in services during encampment clean ups carried out by the City's Clean Team.
- The issuance of a citation creates another opportunity to connect people with services through diversion programs offered by the City Prosecutor's Office.

Citations and Enforcement

Officer Discretion, Enforcement, and Outcomes (Cont'd):

- An increased awareness amongst people experiencing homelessness regarding available resources, and enforcement strategies (citations and arrests) have led to greater cooperation during clean up operations.
- With enforcement of the ordinance now an option, it is possible that individuals may be willing to accept services rather than having to face enforcement action.

Citations and Arrests

- 346 citations issued for camping or loitering after hours in parks or beaches city wide.
- Of these, 161 were issued in the priority areas and 185 were issued in all other areas of the city.

Citywide Efforts

Category	City Teams	Service Data
Engagement and Supportive Services	HSB, LBPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,954 community requests for outreach response • 2,717 people engaged by field-based teams and services • 1,442 people enrolled in emergency shelter or transitional housing • 416 people enrolled in permanent housing programs
Encampment Cleanups	PRM, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,019 PW encampment clean-ups, removing 580 tons of garbage and debris. • 359 PRM encampment clean-ups, removing 254 tons of garbage and debris
Enforcement	LBPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 346 citations for camping in designated areas or loitering after hours in parks or beaches citywide (161 in priority areas and 185 in other parts of the city)



Balanced Approach

- The Grants Pass Decision enables enforcement of anti-camping ordinance actions across the entire City
- Staff have focused on implementing a balanced approach to enforcement and citations
- Between July 2024 and February 2025, the Police Department issued 161 citations (47%) in the four Priority Focus Areas and 185 (53%) in other parts of the City, reflecting a balanced approach



A nighttime photograph of a city skyline, likely Long Beach, California. The scene is dominated by illuminated buildings and palm trees, with their lights reflecting in a body of water in the foreground. A semi-transparent white banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the title text. The overall atmosphere is vibrant and modern.

Six-Month Review of Priority Focus Areas

Priority Focus Areas

- **Four Priority Focus Areas:**
 - Billie Jean King Library and Lincoln Park
 - Veterans Park
 - Gumbiner Park
 - Jenni Rivera Memorial Park and NAACP Park
- Each area was identified and prioritized as heavily utilized public resources with extensive, disruptive encampment activity persisting despite history of repeated outreach and offers of services

Priority Focus Areas

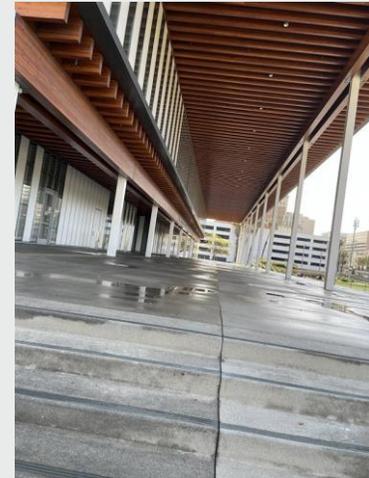
Encampment Resolution Strategy designed for each area:

- Intensified outreach and trust-building, assessment of basic needs, offers of shelter, resources, and supportive services, and connection to permanent housing
- Identification of applicable local, regional, and State resources and partnerships to offer long-term interim and permanent housing options
- Increased frequency of clean-ups to ensure public health and access
- Enforcement of City's anti-camping ordinance utilized as appropriate, after multiple attempts of outreach and offers of shelter and other services proved ineffective



Billie Jean King Library and Lincoln Park

- **Proactive Outreach** – HSB and LBPD QOL (twice per week), evening outreach (once per week), Mobile Access Center (MAC) Team deployed (once per week)
- **Partnerships** – Library Outreach Worker (three times per week), LA Metro Outreach, and Downtown Long Beach Alliance Outreach
- **Encampment Cleanups** – PRM and PW provided daily power-washing of the BJK Library terrace and Encampment Cleanups in Lincoln Park twice per week, in partnership with LBPD QOL and Bike Teams
- **Additional Resources** - State Encampment Resolution Funding (\$5.3M grant) allowed for the master leasing of a 60-room motel in Downtown to provide immediate access to non-congregate shelter, case management, and permanent housing programs
 - Nearly **90** people were sheltered through this program
- **Results** – Significant reductions in encampment activity due to mobilization of significant shelter and outreach resources through Encampment Resolution Program, as well as increased activation of park area, enforcement, and staff presence in the area



Billie Jean King Library and Lincoln Park

Category	City Teams	Service Data
Engagement and Supportive Services	HSB, LBPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 346 people engaged in outreach services • 173 people enrolled in emergency shelter or transitional housing • 27 people entered permanent housing
Encampment Cleanups	PRM, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37 Encampment Clean-ups conducted
Enforcement	LBPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 381 calls for service (including officer-initiated) (Lincoln Park) • 41 citations or arrests related to quality-of-life issues (Lincoln Park), including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 20 citations for camping in designated areas or loitering after hours • 208 calls for service (including officer-initiated) (BJK Library) • 32 citations or arrests related to quality-of-life issues (BJK Library), including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 14 citations for camping in designated areas or loitering after hours



Veterans Park (101 E 28th St)

- **Proactive Outreach** – HSB and LBPD QOL (once per week), Mobile Access Center (MAC) Team deployed (once per week)
- **Partnerships** – LA Metro Outreach, Mental Health America Los Angeles (MHALA)
- **Encampment Cleanups** – PRM conducted clean-ups twice per week
- **Additional Resources** – City staff coordinated slots within Los Angeles County's Pathway Home Program, transitioning 19 people living in the park into motel rooms and enrolling them in permanent housing services.
 - LA Metro Outreach transported clients to a first come, first served shelter in the area
- **Results** – Reductions in encampment activity due to ongoing outreach, successful enrollment of individuals into shelter programs, and increased enforcement and staff presence



Veterans Park (101 E 28th St)

Category	City Teams	Service Data
Engagement and Supportive Services	HSB, LBPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 75 people engaged in outreach services• 22 people enrolled in emergency shelter or transitional housing• 27 people entered permanent housing
Encampment Cleanups	PRM, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 42 Encampment Clean-ups conducted
Enforcement	LBPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 413 calls for service (including officer-initiated)• 81 citations or arrests related to quality-of-life issues, including<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 65 citations for camping in designated areas or loitering after hours

Gumbiner Park (880 E 7th St)

- **Proactive Outreach** – HSB and LBPD QOL (once per week), Mobile Access Center (MAC) Team (once per week)
- **Partnerships** – LA County Department of Health Services provided physical health services on-site, including a team of nurses
- **Encampment Cleanups** – PRM conducted clean-ups twice per week
- From August to December 2024, the park was closed to the public for maintenance, with the park fully cleared and secured. After reopening, HSB and LBPD QOL Teams resumed proactive outreach in the area
- **Results** - Staff report near elimination of encampment activity due to ongoing outreach and increased enforcement and staff presence



Gumbiner Park (880 E 7th St)

Category	City Teams	Service Data
Engagement and Supportive Services	HSB, LBPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 84 people engaged in outreach services• 17 people entered emergency shelter or transitional housing• 4 people entered permanent housing
Encampment Cleanups	PRM, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 17 Encampment Clean-ups conducted
Enforcement	LBPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 130 calls for service (including officer-initiated)• 46 citations or arrests related to quality-of-life issues, including<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 44 citations for camping in designated areas or loitering after hours

Jenni Rivera Memorial Park (2001 Walnut Ave)

- **Proactive Outreach** – HSB and LBPD QOL (2-3 times per week), Mobile Access Center (MAC) Team (once per week)
- **Partnerships** – PATH, Healthcare in Action, Mental Health America, Showers of Hope providing mobile shower unit and hygiene and sanitation services, City of Signal Hill
- **Encampment Cleanups** – PRM conducted clean-ups twice per week
- **Additional Resources** – City staff coordinated slots within Los Angeles County's Pathway Home Program, transitioning 10 people living in the park into motel rooms and enrolling them in permanent housing services
- **Results** – Early positive results, including Pathway Home program, have led to a reduction in encampment activity. Encampment resolution approach is ongoing, with the Team actively working with several people awaiting connection to shelter and permanent housing. The team is currently coordinating ongoing efforts, including engagement, services, infrastructure improvements, and enforcement.



Jenni Rivera Memorial Park (2001 Walnut Ave)

Category	City Teams	Service Data
Engagement and Supportive Services	HSB, LBPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 140 people engaged • 7 people added to shelter and permanent housing queue • 7 people enrolled in emergency shelter • 1 person enrolled in Rapid Rehousing • 3 people entered permanent housing • 10 people enrolled in the LA County Pathway Homes Program
Encampment Cleanups	PRM, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 Encampment Clean-ups
Enforcement	LBPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 169 calls for service (including officer-initiated) • 26 citations or arrests related to quality-of-life issues, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 18 citations for camping in designated areas or loitering after hours

A nighttime photograph of a city skyline reflected in water. The scene is illuminated by various city lights, including streetlights and building lights. The water in the foreground is dark, creating a clear reflection of the lights and buildings above. The sky is dark, and the overall atmosphere is vibrant and urban.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned



- Continue and expand interdepartmental coordination
- Maintain a consistent commitment to long-term solutions and services
- Expand non-congregate shelter opportunities
- Allow the time needed to resolve encampments



Ongoing Challenges

- Limited resources and staffing across all City Departments
- Demand for shelter remains significantly greater than capacity
- Shortage of accessible, affordable permanent housing
- Vehicular homelessness
- Uncertainty at regional, state, and federal agencies and funders



Next Steps

- City staff will continue to implement and expand on the above approach and lessons learned
- As encampment activity is reduced in Priority Focus Areas, staff will develop and implement maintenance plans to ensure areas remain clear and accessible
- As current encampments are resolved, staff will evaluate potential additional Priority Focus Areas based on degree of obstruction to access and use of crucial public amenities, history of continued outreach and offers of services, and availability of resources and capacity
- Staff will continue to pursue a Citywide approach in addition to priority focus areas to resolving public safety complaints



Next Steps

- Staff will also continue to **invest in long-term solutions** to homelessness, pursuing additional resources to expand capacity for shelter, supportive services, and affordable permanent housing, as well as expanded partnerships with other agencies
- **Summer 2025** – Staff will **implement the LA River Encampment Resolution Funding program (Round 3)**, leveraging an \$11M State grant to conduct intensified, coordinated outreach to people living along the LA Riverbed, offering non-congregate shelter in a master-leased motel and connections to permanent housing programs
- Several **shelter projects** are currently nearing completion, including
 - upgrades to Homekey at 1725 LBB (Spring 2025)
 - Youth Shelter and Navigation Center (Summer 2025)
 - Homekey at 5950 LBB (Fall 2025)





Thank you

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