

MOTION

As part of its response to the Los Angeles Alliance for Human Rights v. City of Los Angeles lawsuit, the City has undertaken the creation of "tiny home villages" on various sites around Los Angeles. These villages utilize "Pallet shelters" made by the Pallet Company from Washington state, which are approximately 64 square-foot steel sheds with modest amenities each of which can accommodate one or two persons experiencing homelessness. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the City intends to house one person in each tiny home.

In a revealing article in the Los Angeles Times ("\$130,000 for an 8-foot-by-8-foot shed? That's what L.A. is paying in a bid to house the homeless," December 12, 2020), the initial and projected costs of these villages were explored in depth. The \$130,000 per unit cost cited in the article included site preparation and a variety of on-site infrastructure improvements deemed important for making the villages safer and more functional for their residents.

Crucially, however, the article also noted a number of other locations where the same product has been employed to house the homeless at substantially lower per unit costs. These include Sonoma County (\$21,817), Riverside (\$17,000), Tacoma, WA (\$12,000) and Santa Cruz and Seattle (less than \$10,000, not necessarily using Pallet shelters). The latter benefited from a complete waiver of permit fees for units of this size. All of the locations' villages spurned at least some of the costly amenities being included in the Los Angeles model.

It is abundantly clear that the approach the City is taking to plan and create these tiny home villages, while generous, has the potential to inflate the cost of providing the number of beds using this methodology. With a short-term requirement to find or create beds for the 6,700 homeless targeted in the L.A. Alliance case during a time of scarce resources, the City should be looking for ways to fashion a more economical solution.

~~Now~~, I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Administrative Officer (CAO), the Bureau of Engineering (BOE), the Department of Building and Safety and any other relevant departments and agencies be instructed to review the Pallet Shelter tiny home village program and develop alternatives which can bring the per unit cost down to the \$17,000-22,000 range other California communities have been able to utilize the same equipment for in service of the same purpose; and

I FURTHER MOVE that strategies such as reduced construction costs, alternative approaches to structural stability and safety, pared-down amenities, permit and fee waivers, and involvement of village residents in maintenance and operational tasks when feasible and appropriate, should be explored, among others, as part of this effort; and

I FURTHER MOVE that the CAO and BOE report back to the City Council in 30 days with recommendations for reducing the costs of these tiny home villages so that more Angelenos experiencing homelessness can be provided with shelter.

PRESENTED BY



PAUL KORETZ, Councilmember, 5th District

SECONDED BY:

MIKE BONIN (verbal)
Councilmember, 11th District

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