



To: Honorable City Council
From: John Moreno, City Manager
By: Margarita Matson, Public Safety Director
Steve Coumparoules, Project/Program
Manager
Date: November 12, 2024

SUBJECT: PROHIBITING THE STORAGE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY IN PUBLIC AREAS

BACKGROUND

The City of Paramount aims to maintain a safe, accessible, and aesthetically appealing public environment. In recent months, the accumulation of personal property in public spaces, including sidewalks, streets, parks, and other communal areas, has posed significant challenges to public safety, accessibility, and cleanliness. To address these concerns, staff proposes the adoption of an ordinance prohibiting the storage of personal property in public areas.

DISCUSSION

There are several reasons for the adoption of this ordinance:

1. Health and Safety Concerns

The storage of personal property on the public right-of-way introduces potential risks to the surrounding community. The contents of these items are often unknown and could include hazardous materials, dangerous or perishable items, and refuse. These unknowns can present safety hazards to any residents, visitors, or City personnel that come in contact with them. Additionally, improperly stored items can attract pests and result in the deterioration of public health and safety standards. A proactive ordinance prohibiting such storage would mitigate these risks and enhance overall public safety.

2. Encroachment on Public Spaces

Personal items stored in public areas encroach upon public spaces in an unpermitted manner and limit the functionality of sidewalks, streets, and parks. This encroachment can obstruct pedestrian and vehicular traffic, create tripping or accident hazards, and impede access for individuals with disabilities, in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This could cause individuals who are wheelchair bound to seek unsafe alternatives to sidewalk access, such as maneuvering onto the street. To ensure equitable use and safe accessibility of public spaces for all citizens, this ordinance is critical.

3. Aesthetic and Cleanliness Concerns

The accumulation of personal items disrupts the City's ability to maintain cleanliness standards and a uniform appearance in public spaces. These items contribute to visual blight, detract from the city's aesthetic appeal, and undermine ongoing beautification efforts that uphold high maintenance standards and clutter-free environments. Furthermore, unattended property often becomes unsightly, soiled, and unhygienic, creating challenges for City staff when it is not addressed promptly.

FISCAL IMPACT

While there are no direct costs associated with the adoption of this ordinance, there may be fiscal impacts resulting from the additional enforcement, removal, and disposal services required once it is enacted. It is anticipated that these costs will be absorbed within the existing Public Works and Public Safety service budgets.

VISION, MISSION, VALUES, AND STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

The City's Vision, Mission, and Values set the standard for the organization; establish priorities, uniformity, and guidelines; and provide the framework for policy decision making. The Strategic Outcomes were implemented to provide a pathway to achieving the Vision of a city that is safe, healthy, and attractive. This item aligns with Strategic Outcomes No. 1: Safe Community and No. 5: Attractive and Well-maintained Infrastructure.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Read by title only, introduce Ordinance No. 1190, and place it on the December 17, 2024 agenda for adoption.