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POLICE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
100 WEST FIRST STREET, SUITE 134
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-4112

(213) 236-1400 PHONE
(213) 236-1410 FAX
(213) 236-1440 TDD

February 3, 2026

BPC #26-005

The Honorable City Council
City of Los Angeles, Room 395
c/o City Clerk's Office
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Honorable Members:

RE: RENTING, LEASING, OR SELLING RECREATIONAL VEHICLES IN THE PUBLIC
RIGHT OF WAY – CITY COUNCIL FILE NO. 23-0529

At the regular meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners held on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, the Board APPROVED the Department's report regarding the above-referenced matter.

Accordingly, this report is respectfully submitted for your consideration.

Respectfully,

BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rebecca Munoz".

REBECCA MUNOZ
Commission Executive Assistant

Attachment

c: Chief of Police

26-005
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INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

December 17, 2025
11.3

TO: The Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL FILE NO. 23-0529

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. That the Board of Police Commissioners (Board) REVIEW and APPROVE the Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD or Department) response to the City Council.
2. That the Board TRANSMIT to the Los Angeles City Council the attached response.

DISCUSSION

On September 17, 2025, the Los Angeles City Council adopted the Public Works Committee (Committee) report relative to including recreational vehicles (RVs) as vehicles that an Operator is prohibited from renting, leasing, or selling in the public right-of-way. The Committee directed the Department, in consultation with the City Administrative Officer, City Attorney, Housing Department, Department of Transportation, and Bureau of Sanitation, to report back on the following:

- 1) A clear description of the stages of enforcement and investigation and identify the specific points in the process when outreach teams will be engaged. It shall also detail how the LAPD will coordinate with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority and Council District offices, and establish procedures for communication, referrals, and documentation of services offered to impacted individuals. In addition, outline the protection measures that will be implemented to safeguard individuals residing in RVs. The report should also include how the City of Los Angeles (City) is proactively identifying those who rent RVs and then parking them on the City streets.

This report addresses the City Council's matter. If you have any questions, please contact Commander Gisselle Espinoza, Community Engagement Group, Office of Operations, at (213) 486-8410.

Respectfully,



JIM McDONNELL
Chief of Police

Attachment

**BOARD OF
POLICE COMMISSIONERS**
Approved January 13, 2026
Secretary Rebecca Munoz

FACT SHEET

RENTING, LEASING, OR SELLING RVS IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

CF NO. 23-0529

October 30, 2025

Background

On August 27, 2025, the Public Works Committee, under Council File No. 23-0529, advanced recommendations to amend the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) to prohibit the renting, leasing, or selling of recreational vehicles (RVs) in the public right-of-way. The operators or persons who commit these prohibited acts are commonly referred to as “vanlords”. These amendments expand LAMC Section 80.73.1 and update fines under LAMC Section 89.60 to directly address the practice of vanlords exploiting vulnerable individuals, often Persons Experiencing Homelessness (PEH).

The draft ordinance amends LAMC Section 80.73.1 to specify that LAMC Section 80.73.1(a) expressly includes recreational vehicles as one of the types of vehicles that an operator (as the attached ordinance defines that term), in conducting its business, is prohibited from renting, leasing, or selling in the public right-of-way.

The draft ordinance also amends LAMC Section 89.60 to update the fines and late penalties for violations of LAMC Section 80.73.1 with a proposed escalating fine structure for operators who are in violation of the prohibitions in Section 80.73.1. The current fines have not been updated since 1993 and have little or no deterrent effect on violators. Additionally, enforcement may also rely on LAMC Section 56.12, which, currently, makes it unlawful to enter into a lease, rental agreement, or contract of any kind, whether written or oral, for the use of public right-of-way. Together, these LAMC sections establish a legal framework for prosecuting offenders while protecting victims.

The City Council further directed the Los Angeles Police Department (Department), in consultation with the City Administrative Officer (CAO), City Attorney, Housing Department, Department of Transportation (DOT), Los Angeles Sanitation & Environment (LASAN), and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), to outline enforcement stages, outreach coordination, and victim protection measures. The Department also prepared this report with internal input from the Community Engagement Group and the Detective Bureau.

Enforcement Challenges

Enforcement against vanlords presents unique and significant challenges for the Department. The most pressing obstacle is the evidentiary burden required to build a prosecutable case. Under both LAMC Section 80.73.1 and LAMC Section 56.12, proof of a rental or lease arrangement must be established. This often requires documentation such as a written or digital contract, evidence of payment through cash or electronic platforms, or physical proof such as a key or access provided by the suspect(s). In many cases, individuals exploited by vanlords lack formal documentation of their arrangements, forcing the Department to depend primarily on victim statements to build a case. The lack of formalized records in these informal rental transactions makes it difficult to secure charges and pursue penalties under the law.

Victim cooperation represents another significant hurdle. Individuals residing in unlawfully rented RVs are often reluctant to provide identifying information due to fears of retaliation, mistrust of law enforcement, or concern about losing their only form of shelter. While the creation of an anonymous reporting system may help mitigate these concerns, the strength of investigations depends on the availability of detailed, verifiable information from those directly impacted. Without the willing participation of victims, many cases risk stalling before they can progress to the prosecutorial stage.

Establishing a clear link between suspects and the vehicles they are renting is also a resource-intensive challenge. It requires a thorough investigation of Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) registration records, confirmation of vehicle ownership, and, in some cases, examination of multiple vehicles operated by the same individual or network. These steps often demand detective-level follow-up and extended time commitments that not all Areas can accommodate. Furthermore, resource constraints within the Department mean that not every Area has the personnel to pursue lengthy and complex investigations into vanlord activity when other priorities may dominate their workload.

An equally important component of the City's response is education for potential victims. Many individuals who pay vanlords are unaware that these operators are conducting their business illegally, or that entering into such an arrangement exposes them to unsafe conditions and the potential for displacement. As part of outreach efforts, the Department, in coordination with LAHSA and community-based organizations, would need to develop educational materials in multiple languages that clearly explain the risks of paying to live in unlawfully rented RVs, the rights of individuals who may be exploited, and the avenues available for confidential reporting.

Education campaigns should also be delivered during outreach encounters, through community meetings, and online platforms to ensure that residents understand both the legal protections in place and the support resources available to them. This proactive educational approach seeks to reduce victimization by making individuals aware that vanlord activity is unlawful and that the City has established safe channels for both reporting and assistance.

Investigation, Outreach, Enforcement, and Impound System

The Department established systems in place for the investigation, outreach, enforcement, and ultimately, impoundment of vehicles used in vanlord schemes. In addition to the process outline below, the Department will incorporate our existing partnership with the CAO vehicle dwelling process, ensuring accountability and integration with homelessness-related operations.

The process begins with reporting and developing a system for both anonymous tips and referrals from City, County, and community partners when they encounter PEH utilizing a vehicle as a dwelling and paying rent to a vanlord. The PEH or community members who suspect vanlord activity will be able to submit confidential tips through Crime Stoppers, which provides a trusted mechanism for reporting without fear of retaliation. Submissions will be routed directly to the responsible Area for follow-up.

In instances where a referral can be made without a need for anonymity, the person reporting can email the Department Homeless Coordinator's Office (OO_DHC@lapd.online), who will then

ensure that the responsible Area receives the information for the follow-up. This enables the Department to distinguish between cases that require immediate safety intervention and those that require service referrals or long-term investigation.

The next stage is investigation. Officers and, where necessary, detectives will work to substantiate reports by obtaining statements from victims or witnesses, documenting payments or transfers, and verifying registration and ownership records through the DMV. The City Attorney's Office will support this process by advising on evidentiary requirements to ensure cases are prosecutable under the appropriate provisions of the LAMC. Where information is incomplete, the Department may still monitor identified vehicles and locations for patterns of vanlord activity.

Following the investigation, the Department will move to the outreach and referral stage. The DHC will coordinate with the CAO to connect affected residents with interim housing, shelter, health services, and legal aid resources. This ensures that individuals living in rented RVs are offered supportive alternatives before enforcement occurs, consistent with CAO protocols that require outreach and engagement before vehicle dwelling operations.

If violations are confirmed and outreach has been documented, the Department can initiate the enforcement stage. Depending on the facts, operators may be cited or arrested under LAMC Section 80.73.1 for engaging in unlawful business practices, or under LAMC Section 56.12 for entering into unlawful rental agreements in the public right-of-way.

Finally, the process culminates with vehicle impoundments where warranted. Impounds will be considered when clear evidence of unlawful rental exists and when outreach confirms that affected PEH have been connected to appropriate services. The CAO has established a process for conducting a vehicle dwelling operation. Any potential need for impounding a vehicle involved in suspected vanlord activity would be referred to the CAO to ensure outreach is conducted and all required partners are involved before initiating a vehicle dwelling operation. Post-action reviews, conducted under CAO oversight, will document the enforcement action, service referrals, and outcomes achieved, creating a feedback loop to inform future operations.

Summary

The Department's enforcement strategy against violations of LAMC Sections 80.73.1 and 56.12 acknowledges the unique challenges in evidence gathering, victim cooperation, suspect linkage, and Area capacity. Utilizing established systems for investigation, outreach, enforcement, and vehicle impound, and by aligning all actions with the CAO's established vehicle dwelling process, the City can protect vulnerable individuals, hold offenders accountable, and address vehicles maintained in an illegal condition on City streets.

The framework outlined in the investigation, outreach, enforcement, and impound system section strikes a balance between enforcement and compassion, placing equal emphasis on both victim protection and prosecutorial success.

Prepared by:
Department Homeless Coordinator