

Communication from Public

Name: Paloma Bustos

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Comments for Public Posting: My name is Paloma Bustos with the Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Initiative at Loyola Law School. We support Item 62 and the development of interim housing for transition-age youth experiencing homelessness. We also encourage the City to include human trafficking screening and assessment as part of services at this site. Youth experiencing homelessness face heightened vulnerability to exploitation because they may lack safe housing, income, transportation, or trusted adults. Traffickers can exploit these needs by offering housing, work, money, or other support. Assessment should include both sex and labor trafficking, including forced criminality, where youth may be coerced into activities such as theft, drug sales, or fraud. Los Angeles County has recognized these forms of exploitation in its child trafficking work. Staff should also receive trauma-informed training to recognize trafficking indicators and connect youth to specialized services. Housing provides an important opportunity to identify exploitation early and prevent further harm. Thank you.