

# VENICE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

## *Town Hall on Homelessness, Parking & Public Safety*

### **Committee Policy Charge & Question Framework Executive Summary**

#### **Purpose –**

The purpose of this Town Hall is **not** to debate ideology, assign blame, or relitigate past conflicts.

Its purpose is to produce a shared Venice Neighborhood Council policy position on:

- Public safety
- Vehicle habitation and storage (RVs / OV vehicles)
- Parking enforcement
- Outreach and services
- Inter-agency coordination

This policy is intended to guide **immediate action, near-term coordination, and long-term governance** for Venice over the next **30 days, 90 days, and beyond.**

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#### **Committee Charge (Applies to Every VNC Committee)**

Each VNC Committee is asked to:

1. Review the policy questions below **through the lens of its committee's mission**
2. Identify how this issue impacts:
  - The committee's subject area
  - Its constituents
  - Public trust and safety
3. Prepare:
  - 2-3 **committee-specific questions** for relevant City departments
  - Any **conditions, safeguards, or priorities** the committee believes should accompany enforcement or services
4. Participate in shaping a **single, unified VNC policy statement** emerging from the Town Hall

- *No committee is being asked to surrender its values — only to express them within a shared civic framework.*

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## **Core Policy Questions (Common to All Committees)**

These questions form the **baseline** discussion. Committees may add to them, but should not replace them.

### **7. Public Safety Threshold**

At what point does prolonged vehicle habitation, derelict storage, or blocked right-of-way constitute a **public safety issue**, regardless of housing status?

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### **2. Enforcement Consistency**

Should parking, vehicle, and traffic laws be enforced **consistently across Venice**, or selectively based on location or circumstance? If selectively, by what standard?

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### **3. Authority & Responsibility**

Which City departments are responsible for enforcement when violations are clear?

- LAPD
- DOT
- Sanitation
- Fire
- Joint tasking

What coordination is required for enforcement to actually occur?

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### **7. Time-to-Action**

If City leadership has stated enforcement can occur within hours when authorized, what is a **reasonable response time** for clear violations on Venice streets?

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## **7. Services & Outreach (Without Delay)**

How should outreach and services be **paired with enforcement** without indefinitely postponing public safety action?

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## **7. Geographic Fairness**

Should enforcement standards differ by street, neighborhood, or political pressure — or be uniform throughout Venice?

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## **7. Resident, Business & Visitor Impact**

How should resident access, emergency access, sanitation, business impact, and pedestrian safety be weighed alongside humanitarian concerns?

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### **Department-Specific Questions Committees May Ask**

Committees should tailor questions to their remit, but the following departments are **strongly recommended** to be present:

#### **LAPD / SLO (Capt. Epolito)**

- What enforcement tools are currently authorized but underused?
- What stops enforcement from occurring once violations are identified?

#### **Council District Office**

- What policy direction has been given to City departments regarding Venice?
- What immediate actions can be authorized without new legislation?

#### **DOT / Parking Enforcement**

- What constitutes a tow-eligible violation today?
- What is required to scale enforcement consistently?

## **Fire & Safety**

- What conditions trigger fire or emergency access violations?
- What risks are currently present on Washington Blvd and similar corridors?

## **Sanitation / Outreach**

- How is outreach coordinated when enforcement is imminent?
- What happens after enforcement — and where do gaps exist?

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## **Expected Outcome of the Town Hall**

By the conclusion of the Town Hall, VNC aims to produce:

1. **A unified policy statement** endorsed by committees
2. A clear list of:
  - **Immediate actions** (days–weeks)
  - **Short-term actions** (30–90 days)
  - **Long-term structural needs** (funding, coordination, policy reform)
3. Identified City representatives and departments responsible for each action
4. A Venice-specific governance framework that can be sustained for the **next 30+ years**

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## **Guiding Principle**

Public safety, human dignity, and fair enforcement are not mutually exclusive.

Inconsistent enforcement undermines all three.

## APPENDIX A

### Framing the Policy Spectrum: Ensuring a Balanced Town Hall

#### Purpose

The Venice Neighborhood Council recognizes that the community holds **deeply divergent views** on homelessness, vehicle habitation, parking, and public safety.

The Town Hall is designed **not to privilege one philosophy**, but to surface how different policy approaches affect Venice as a whole.

To do this fairly, the Town Hall will acknowledge **both ends of the policy spectrum**, while guiding committees toward **practical, lawful, and Venice-specific outcomes**.

#### *The Two Policy Poles (Stated Neutrally)*

##### **POLE A: Maximum Autonomy / Minimal Enforcement**

*People experiencing homelessness should be free to live where they choose, including in vehicles, with minimal enforcement of parking or vehicle codes. Enforcement is viewed as harmful displacement unless housing is immediately available.*

##### **Values often cited:**

- Human dignity
- Autonomy
- Harm reduction
- Opposition to criminalization of poverty

##### **POLE B: Uniform Law Enforcement / Public Safety Priority**

*Parking, vehicle, and public safety laws should be enforced consistently for all residents and vehicles, regardless of housing status. Public right-of-way and safety are paramount.*

##### **Values often cited:**

- Rule of law
- Fairness to housed and tax-paying residents
- Emergency access and safety
- Predictability and consistency

## **What the Town Hall Is Not**

- Not a referendum between Pole A and Pole B
- Not a moral judgment of individuals
- Not a venue for absolutes (“always” / “never”)

The Town Hall is about **how Venice governs reality**, not ideology.

## **\*Committee Response Framework (By Example)**

Committees are encouraged to **locate themselves between the poles**, based on their mission.

### **\*Example Committee Responses (Illustrative Only)**

#### *Homelessness Committee*

- May emphasize:
  - Outreach-first approaches
  - Clear pathways to services
  - Avoiding displacement without follow-up
- Still asked to answer:
  - When does public safety require enforcement?
  - What enforcement should *never* be delayed?

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#### *Parking/ Transportation / Infrastructure Committee*

- May emphasize:
  - ADA access
  - Traffic flow
  - Emergency vehicle clearance
- Still asked to answer:
  - Are there circumstances where enforcement should pause?
  - How should DOT coordinate with outreach?

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#### *Public Health & Safety Committee*

- Safety Issues

May emphasize:

- Fire risk
- Crime prevention

- Emergency response time
- Still asked to answer:
  - What safeguards should accompany enforcement?
  - How to avoid unnecessary escalation?

### Health Committee Issues

- May emphasize:
  - Sanitation
  - Environmental hazards
  - Public space access
- Still asked to answer:
  - How long is it acceptable for violations to persist?
  - What conditions demand immediate action?

### **Town Hall Structure to Avoid One-Sidedness**

#### **1. Balanced Opening Frame (Moderator)**

- Acknowledge both poles **explicitly**
- State that neither pole alone governs VNC policy
- Reinforce that **law, safety, and humanity must coexist**

#### **2. Department Testimony Before Debate**

Departments speak **before** public comment so facts are established:

- What can be enforced today
- What cannot
- What requires authorization
- What delays action

This prevents ideology from overriding reality.

#### **3. Committee-Driven Questions (Not Open Mic First)**

Committees ask **prepared questions** tied to their missions.  
Public comment follows, informed by facts.

#### **4. Policy Synthesis at the End**

Moderator summarizes:

- Areas of consensus

- Areas of tension
- What actions are supported **now**
- What requires longer-term work

### **Shared Policy Ground (Where Most Committees Can Agree)**

Most committees, regardless of philosophy, tend to align on:

- Inconsistent enforcement is harmful
- Emergency access must be protected
- Fire and safety risks are non-negotiable
- Outreach should not be performative or endless
- Venice needs a **predictable system**, not ad-hoc responses

This is where the **joint policy statement** emerges.

### **Guiding Neutral Statement for Organizers**

*This Town Hall is not about choosing sides. It is about choosing a governance approach that protects public safety, respects human dignity, and applies laws fairly—so Venice can function today and for the next 30 years.*