

Blueprint for Displacement

Breaking Down LAPD's Echo Park Rehabilitation After Action Report

September 2021



A man sets up a tent in front of police while activists and supporters of residents of a homeless encampment protest at Echo Park Lake in Los Angeles late on March 24, 2021, ahead of a planned and announced clean-up of the encampment - part of an estimated half-million USD city clean-up and repair effort.

RINGO CHIU/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

**there is no justice in reform
but there is healing in abolition.**



In August 2021, LAPD released an "After-Action Report" on their campaign to banish the community living in Echo Park Lake, which culminated in a raid in March 2021. This zine is a community response to that report from Stop LAPD Spying Coalition, LA CAN, and Streetwatch LA.

Table of Contents

- Pg 1 - what is LAPD's Echo Park Rehabilitation After Action Report?
- Pg 2 - whats the harm?
- Pg 3 - shelters + sanctioned encampments are not housing
- Pg 4 - housing with carceral strings attached is extortion
- Pg 5 - Homes not Prisons
- Pg 6 - what is it costing us?
- Pg 7 - law enforcement riding Swan Boat in Echo Park after the raid
- Pg 8 - long term solutions not ongoing displacement!
- Pg 9 - what is S A R A?
- Pg 10 - how does S A R A work in Echo Park?
- Pg 11- not a moment in time but a continuation of history
- Pg 12 - Fight Back!
- Pg 13- Watch the Watchers
- Pg 14- Watch the Watchers continued

what is LAPD's Echo Park Rehabilitation After Action Report?



This report is a piece of propaganda that outlines the infrastructure and resources LAPD used to criminalize and banish people living around Echo Park Lake, starting in November 2019 and leading up to the 3 day raid from March 24 to 27, 2021.

who are the collaborators?

The report shows the various city entities working together to once again banish unhoused and working class communities. The harmdoers include Council District 13, LA Homeless Services Authority, LA Sanitation, LA Fire Department, Park Rangers, LA Department of Recreation and Parks, Department of Transportation, the City Attorney, LAPD, non-profits contracting with the city (ie. Urban Alchemy), and gentrifiers. LAPD's "data-driven policing" and "community policing" programs are a big part of how all these agencies and institutions collaborate to criminalize our communities.

This is what community policing looks like

what's the harm?

It's no surprise that police surveillance, enforcement, and engagement dramatically increased once a core of Black leadership began to grow among the residents of the encampment. That's when police and park rangers started showing up most aggressively, ramping up tickets, arrests, and being politically intimidated in jail. **Anti-Blackness** opened the door to the brutalization of Indigenous and gender non-conforming park community leaders, along with other lake residents.

Many people came to Echo Park because they were kicked out of shelters, told there was no room, put in harm's way, or denied the freedom to live autonomously. Shuffling in and out of this system of carceral housing, the park was their effort to build a safe home and community. When the city saw the community growing in numbers and solidarity, police decided to use several weapons to monitor, map, destabilize, and attack the encampment, including: social media surveillance, citations, arrests of the encampment's most vocal voices. Over time, they selectively enforced statutes like LAMC 63.44 (which criminalizes certain activities in the parks), LAMC 56.11 (which criminalizes how people use of store their property outside), outreach for removal (like pigs showing up with pizza to infiltrate and monitor the encampment or cut people individual deals "move your tent a bit and you'll be fine"), and undercover cops trying to sell drugs.

housing with carceral strings attached is extortion

When LAPD and the city claim that Lake residents refused offers for housing, they don't mean offers of real housing. Instead, what the city "offered" was:

Congregate Shelters Project Roomkey Parking Lots

(Urban Alchemy was awarded a \$1.1 million contract for their "Safe Sleeping Village")

For example, Lake residents described being promised "housing" by police but then being taken to faraway shelters in Long Beach or Watts that one resident described as "worse than jail." Sometimes police took people to shelters where a bed wasn't even available.

In shelters and temporary housing programs like Project Roomkey, people face strict curfews, aren't provided a key, can't control when they come and go, can't have children and families, are forced to throw away possessions, can't control what they eat, and once these programs end have to go back to the street without critical supplies like a tent. This isn't housing. It's surveillance.

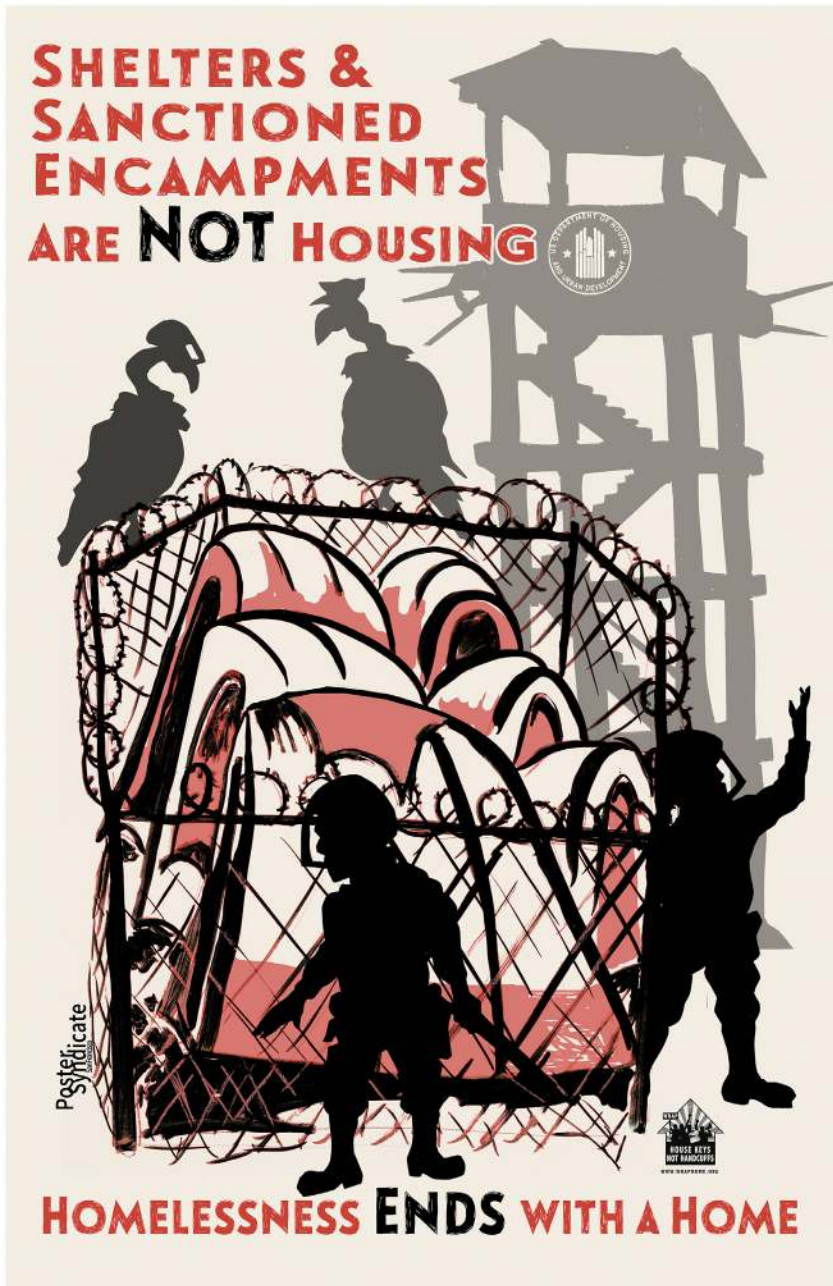


Image- Western Regional Advocacy Group

Homes Not Prisons

Through partnerships with the state, non-profits have also been deputized as an extension of the police state to extract information for the purpose of criminalizing and banishing people. The non-profit Urban Alchemy first came to Los Angeles in 2020 to provide showers, bathrooms, and cleaning to Skid Row. In Echo Park, they conducted so-called "outreach" for removal by trying to force Lake Residents into carceral housing and collecting data to support a false narrative that residents were "refusing housing," without care for the grievances or safety concerns vocalized by the community.

what is it costing us?

There is no money for permanent housing, pending waves of eviction, hundreds of vacant Caltrans homes, but the state had money for:

\$2 million for police salaries and overtime during the 3-day raid

Out of **\$735,000** that the city claimed it spent on "repairs" of Echo Park

\$250,000 used to install CCTV cameras

\$104,000 to install fences

*which doesn't include tax expenditures by other city agencies, the cost to stream, process, and analyze the data from these cameras or the daily resources police waste to stalk our communities.



Long-term Solutions Not Ongoing Displacement!

LAPD is deploying familiar tropes to justify the criminalization of our unhoused neighbors, dismissing them as “well-equipped” people who are refusing offers of housing and support. In reality, these communities are being swept into perpetual state dependency, instability, and vulnerability via carceral short-term solutions. The narrative that people don’t want housing is contradicted by what Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) recognized in their 2020 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count report, explaining that the top reasons for increased homelessness in Los Angeles is

- 1. housing affordability**
- 2. housing availability**
- 3. Income inequality**

**WE REFUSE
TO BE SWEEP
INTO DARK
CORNERS**



Image: Steve Lucero

**Law enforcement riding a Swan Boat in Echo Park
Lake after the raid**

what is S A R A?

SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment) is a surveillance and policing strategy that LAPD has been using for years. LAPD's After Action report explains that it used the SARA model to monitor the encampment and plan the raid.

LAPD pretends this program isn't just more of the same racist, proactive enforcement by hiding behind coordinated outreach efforts with the city and other stakeholders (including the developers and gentrifiers that are contributing to making rent too damn high). LAPD's outreach efforts were never intended to support the needs of the unhoused residents of Echo Park but instead to weaken the encampment's solidarity and collect data to map out enforcement strategies.

how S A R A works in Echo Park?

Scanning= Spying and Surveillance:

LAPD scanned the encampment through so called "outreach" efforts as well as surveillance, ticketing, and arrests. LAPD appears to closely spy on social media accounts, community groups, and other protests. There are several references to real-time monitoring of reporters, BLM's weekly End Police Associations protest, StreetWatch, etc. Echo Park became more heavily surveilled through the architecture of surveillance, such as foot patrols, installing CCTV cameras and streaming the data into a centralized system

Analysis= Targeting and Criminalization:

LAPD uses the data collected during surveillance to create "mission sheets," identify "neighborhood engagement areas," and assign resources that target and criminalize people.

Response= Patrolling and Arresting:

LAPD uses supposedly "problem-oriented" policing programs like "Safe Passages," Field Interview (FI) cards, etc to infiltrate communities and make arrests and create more opportunities to collect data. LAPD also increased criminalization of the park over time to turn up pressure in the lead-up to the raid.

Assessment = Pseudoscience & Attempted Legitimization:

LAPD works with academics, non-profits, and other partners to conduct community surveys, write reports, and manipulate data that tout results and claim success.

Not a moment in time, but a continuation of history

The March raid on Echo Park is not the first example of police violently banishing people from a place where they are trying to survive and create community.

Before Echo Park, there was Leimert Park as well as the regular sweeps and raids of encampments across the city. The strategies the city used in Echo Park – months of gradually making the space inhabitable, attacking the solidarity and leadership that was forming, and deploying a combination LAPD, nonprofit, and municipal “homeless outreach” efforts to map the community in preparation for violently clearing them from the space – is also a preview of the campaign of criminalizing homelessness that the city is pursuing with the revisions to LAMC 41.18 that went into effect on September 3, 2021.

FIGHT BACK!

If you are experiencing homelessness, come to a meeting of Unhoused Tenants Against Carceral Housing (UTACH)– email **info@utach.org** or text **(323)412-9648** for more information about joining or to share your experience.

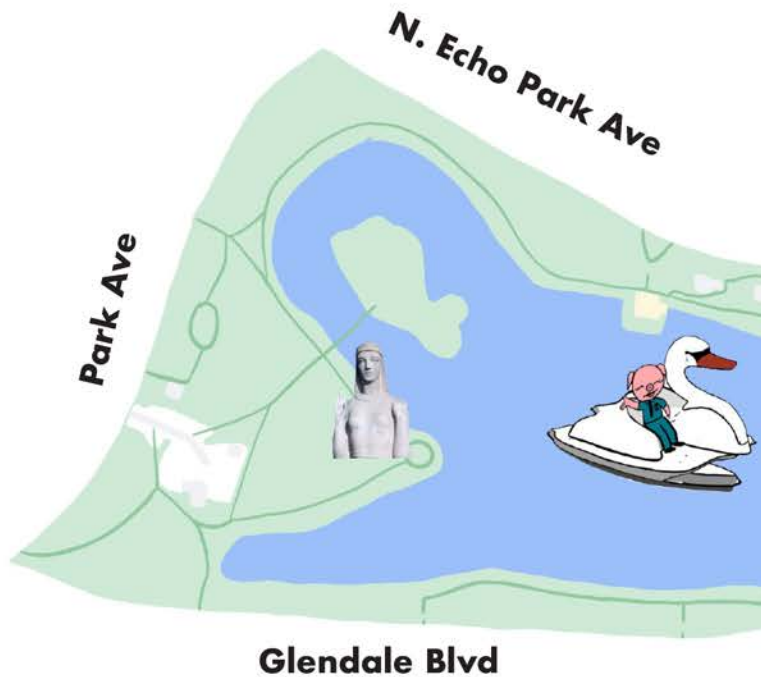
If you witness an encampment sweep, see a 14-day sweep notice, or police harass you or an unhoused neighbor, please text Street Watch LA at **(323)379-2275**

To access bibliography, please scan QR code:



Watch the Watchers

Help us identify the 33 CCTV cameras installed in Echo Park. Send us a photo of your map to **stoplapdspying@gmail.com**



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NOTES:

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