

**Problem Properties
in the
Empowerment Congress North Area
Neighborhood Development Council
Area**

**Photographic Supplement for
City Council District 8**

September 2008

Prevote Final Report

**For review by the Governing Board
at its October 2, 2008, meeting.**

Prepared from stakeholder complaints

**Empowerment Congress North Area
Neighborhood Development Council
Public Safety Committee
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1921 W. 23rd Street.

Neighbors and police complain that people at this apparent duplex carry on an illegal car repair business. Put on our list in November 2006. Photo as of October 2, 2007. Unusually deep front yard, all dirt, used to park vehicles. Numerous vehicles were impounded in the spring of 2007. Housing Inspector Keith Gordon during an inspection in July 2007 ordered the owners to clean up the dirt yard and to limit parking to the right side that would be the driveway between the apron at the curb and the gate to the back but is not currently marked. In observations of July 5 and 15, August 20, and September 2 and 30, 2008, two cars were parked on the “lawn” dirt. At the Sept. 18 public safety committee meeting it was reported that there has been a recent drug arrest at this location. LADBS had closed its case on April 14, 2008. Deputy City Attorney has asked LADBS Senior Inspector Todd Robertson to reopen the matter. He has said he will make a personal inspection.



**1883 W Adams Blvd at LaSalle,
recycling center**

This corner has been a major crime and nuisance problem for the neighborhood, with strong complaints from residents, local block clubs, and several small business owners. The owners in 2005 demolished the original building and constructed a small market at the south end of the property. Building and Safety revoked the recycling center conditional use permit January 13, 2006, because the building had been demolished and the recycling business moved to the north of the property, too close to the adjacent apartment

house on La Salle. The owners appealed but lost the two levels of appeal, to Zoning and Planning and to the South Los Angeles Planning Commission, in 2006. Building and Safety in January 2007 issued orders to stop using this property as a recycling center. The owners appealed to the Building and Safety Board of Commissioners. At a June 5, 2007, hearing the Board voted 4-0 to reject the appeal. Building and Safety also justified the revocation saying the owners had submitted a false site plan that specified a required six parking places for the new market. The recycling business has effectively taken over the whole parking lot, and they lock up the lot when they are closed, leaving the market without even the pretense of having parking. Criminal charges were filed on the grounds of not providing the required parking. The civil case on the Building and Safety permit revocation and the criminal one are still in the courts. In observation of July 5, 2008 (see photos) the two parking spots at the north end were blocked by plastic trash cans. A large white truck belonging to the recycling business frequently double parks in the street blocking access to the parking lot. In observation of September 2 new rules have the north lot gate closed. The criminal case got a continuance to September 12. Reportedly there is also an IRS investigation of this business.



1476 W 29th Street

Tenants at this house (listed as a duplex, so was a Housing Dept jurisdiction) continually store large amounts of objects in the yard and on the front and back porches. This location was on our list all spring 2007, when yard sales were held repeatedly. Housing issued orders to desist on May 11, 2007. The sales and extensive outdoor storage began again in September 2007. Put back on our list in November 2007. Complaint submitted to Housing: 12/4/07: "The tenant regularly stores large amounts of material for yard sales on porch and in yard. Have observed 21 yard sales on nonconsecutive days this year." Early in 2008 Housing transferred the case back to Building and Safety, which got the tenants to stop the yard sales but failed to get them to cease the extensive storage on the front and back porches. It is now on its second LADBS inspector, John Utreras, (323) 789-2795. Building and Safety issued two cleanup orders, order #1709805 with a compliance date of March 20 and order #1772067 with a compliance date of May 7, 2008. Neither had any effect. There was still excessive storage on the front and back porches on September 29, 2008. We emailed Inspector John Utreras July 30 asking for a status report on this property. He never responded. We left a phone message for Utreras's supervisor, Principal Inspector Leo Fuller, on September 2. He never responded. Deputy City Attorney Jan De Andrade discovered that LADBS closed the case on 8/5/08. She has asked Senior Inspector Todd Robertson to personally inspect. His email is todd.robertson@lacity.org.



1533 W. 30th Street

On the complaint of LAPD Senior Lead Officer Brian Hun that there are people living in the garage of this single family house we reported them to Building and Safety July 14 to have LADBS investigate. They have assigned Inspector John Utreras, (323) 789-2795. No orders had been issued as of mid-September.



1783 W. 35th Street

Extensive damage to roof and general deterioration. Put on our list in August 2005. Various LADBS inspectors have had the case. Most recently Inspector Michael Tuck (213-252-3936). He issued orders with compliance date of 8/17/2007, specifying: "Water heater venting. Plumbing not installed per code. Insufficient size of flooring or floor supports. Hazardous or unclean premises. Hazardous wiring in the dwelling. Lack of adequate heating. General dilapidation or improper maintenance as required by Section 91.8104. The interior floors, walls, and ceilings, or portion thereof are in need of general maintenance and repair. Deteriorated or ineffective weather protection including crumbling or loose plaster, waterproofing of exterior walls, roofs, floors, foundations, broken windows or doors, broken, rotted, split or buckled exterior wall or roof coverings. Deteriorated or ineffective weather protection including crumbling or loose plaster, waterproofing of exterior walls, roofs, floors, foundations, broken windows or doors, broken, rotted, split or buckled exterior wall or roof coverings. Lack of minimum amounts of required natural light and ventilation."

New information in August 2008 is that there is one living heir to this property but that person is considered mentally incapacitated and is unable to take possession, leaving the property permanently vacant. The case is being handled by Citywide Nuisance Abatement attorney Felton Newell, 310-575-8500. Photo dated September 2, 2008. In observation of September 2, 2008, this property had finally been boarded and fenced.



Century Liquor, 3894 S. Western Avenue

A central focus of transients and alcoholics who hang out or live in the nearby Martin Luther King Park. Put on our list in January 2008. The new building for the Exposition Park Regional Library, formerly at 36th Place and Vermont Ave., is slated for completion this summer on Western Avenue right across the street from Century Liquor, where the problems with alcoholic street people promise to create large problems. A Zoning hearing was held January 28 where the Community Coalition Against Substance Abuse, the Empowerment Congress North, and community members testified on the negative impact of this business on the area.. Zoning Administrator Patricia Brown issued her report April 29, which determined that Century Liquor "is a public nuisance." She imposed 25 conditions on the business, including that they remove all graffiti within 24 hours, that hours be limited to 8 am to 11 pm, that they install video surveillance of the exterior of the property with the tapes retained for at least 30 days and available to the police department, that they hire a state licensed security guard to be on duty from 3 pm to closing every day, that all signs advertising alcohol be removed from windows and the door, that no individual cups or servings of ice be provided to customers. The conditions are to stay with the property and be binding on any future owner. The report required that the owners file a Plan Approval application within nine months leading to a hearing that would review the conditions and have the power if indicated to order discontinuance of the uses of the property. LAPD Senior Lead Officer Brian Hun reports that the situation has improved since the conditions were imposed. But we have a report from a Public Safety Committee member on July 7 that there were a couple of loiterers in the parking lot and people buying alcohol and heading off into Martin Luther King Park. No bad activity seen in observation around noon on September 30.



Alley between 39th St and 38th Place just east of Western Ave.

Part of the blight in the area around Century Liquor, there is repeated extensive dumping in the alley and it is regularly used by transients to drink alcoholic beverages purchased at Century Liquor. Put back on our list in February 2008. Reported online to Street Services February 19. It was cleaned in observation of March 4. However, it is clear a longer-term correction is needed. We have a special concern because this alley faces across 39th Street the new Exposition Park Regional Library due to open this summer. The plentiful hiding places in foliage growing through the mostly dirt alley provide cover for potentially dangerous people next to what will be a major gathering place for children. Deputy City Attorney Jan De Andrade and LAPD Senior Lead Officer Pierre Olega have requested help from CD8 City Councilmember Bernard Parks to have the alley paved to discourage the transients. At this time the alley is partly covered with asphalt and partly just dirt. We met with Dennis Rodriguez of Councilmember Parks staff August 18 to renew the request for paving the alley, but suggested if that was not feasible that the city remove the shrubbery in the alley that provides hiding places for alcoholics who may cause problems for the new Exposition Park Regional Library that opened that day. Nothing had changed in observation of September 30, six weeks later.