

The eMail Chain Chronology and Photographs Submitted to Price's Office
Associated with Belmont Shore Parklet Program:

- Early July: There were large vomit deposits in at least two locations in close proximity to Second Street bars and restaurants, impinging on residents' walkability and enjoyment of public spaces. (There have been many more such deposits and stains in recent months, and more emerge weekly, but we documented these in particular due to their prominence.)
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- July 5: A citizen used the heavily promoted and regularly touted mechanism to report such blight: the GoLB app.
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- July 5: Response via the app: "It's the resident responsibility to maintain the sidewalk. Thank you."
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- July 5: District 3 office (no name) to citizen: "Thanks for your email, and I'm sorry to hear about this. I am including Gabby from our office in this email to reach out to Public Works on getting this cleaned up."
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- July 6: Citizen reply to GoLB: "If these patrons throw up on Second Street, then the sidewalk is cleaned by the cleaning service engaged by the Parking Commission, but if drunk patrons walk a few steps further to the side streets, then residents are responsible for cleaning up the mess on the sidewalk? ... Am I correct in interpreting your policy?"
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- July 6: Citizen reply to District 3 office: "I am enclosing the screen shot from the GoLongBeach app which reads that the sidewalks (other than Second Street) are the responsibility of the residents."
- July 6: Gabby Joy from District 3 office: "We can have the Clean Team respond to this matter as well. It's a team effort... Thank you for bringing this to our attention."
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- July 6: Lisa West from District 3 office: "I may be able to get PW to come out and clean the vomit if it's still there."
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- July 6: Citizen to District 3 office: "I've never minded fishing out the occasional beer bottle from my front shrubbery, but this is much more base."
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- July 6: Gabby from District 3 office: "I received an update that a Public Works team will be going to the two locations you provided to clean and remove what's left."
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- July 13: Citizen to District 3 team: "It has been a week since you advised that Public Works was going to clean up the vomit on Glendora and

Pomona Avenues adjacent to Second Street. Today I checked and found the original two vomit incidents and a new one. ... I am enclosing timestamped photos with reference items so the three spots can be found by Public Works. Would you be so kind as to relay this information to the department and ask when it will be out to do the cleaning?"

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— July 13: Gabby from District 3 office: "Thank you. I'll provide this to our clean team to address ASAP."

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— July 13: Councilwoman Price: "I'll also forward this to the BSBA. They should be paying attention to this. We will get it taken care of."

— July 20: "It has now been TWO WEEKS since I asked for the city's help in cleaning vomit from the sidewalks and parking lot adjacent to 2nd Street. I am including timestamped photos that I took this morning. What do you consider to be a reasonable amount of time to resolve this? Two weeks seems unreasonable to me. Please provide a date that the city will have this cleaned. We are waiting."

— July 20: Gabby from District 3 office: "These will need to be addressed by Belmont Shore Business Association. I'm looping in Dede Rossi, Executive Director for the BSBA. These are actual stains on the sidewalk vs human waste that will need more than the average cleanup."

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— July 20: Citizen to District 3 office: "I don't understand your response. For two weeks you communicated that Public Works would clean these messes, and now it's punted over to the BSBA? Who has final responsibility for all this? I'm still asking my elected representative to help with this incredible nuisance."

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— July 20: Gabby from District 3 office: "I'm not 'punting' anything. ... I also shared with you my concern in removing the dark stains and how working with the business association may help us in removing the stains on the sidewalk. You did not respond to that private message until now to update us all here that the stains remain. ... (T)he business association also contracts a team to power wash the sidewalks especially during the summer. I am not punting work just because I'm asking for additional resources to resolve removing the stains from the sidewalk."

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— July 20: Dede Rossi of BSBA: "We power wash weekly, but if there is an issue we need to know please email us and not everyone you can think of. I do not know exactly where this issue is because I have not seen photos. Please address me ... and I will get on it first thing in the morning. Photos and exact location will help."

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— July 20: Citizen to Dede Rossi and District 3 office: "Please read the thread below. I have provided photos and locations two weeks in a row."

The issue went from:

1. GoLongBeach app to...
2. District 3 office to...
3. Public Works (Clean Team?) to...
4. District 3 office to...
5. Representative of private business org (the BSBA) who again asks for the same information provided repeatedly to other entities???

And let's reflect on the June 2022 meeting of the Belmont Shore Parking Commission, during which an hour was spent discussing an extensive list of aesthetic and health/safety complaints raised by both residents AND business owners themselves, but the end result of which seemed to be to blame the power-washing vendor for not doing an effective job of cleaning up of the many, MANY stains that dot Second Street and the adjacent side streets. And at which the Commission made clear it is not responsible for the side streets, even though the impacts can be effectively traced to bars and restaurants on Second Street.

Let's be honest with one another: Would you undertake such an outreach effort to protect your community's quality of life if this is the cumulative response you've seen over two+ weeks?

You're all in public service, you know the resources and mechanisms, and it'd still be daunting and frustrating, right?

Imagine what this feels like to an ordinary resident simply trying to help their neighbors and the community, and not even knowing where to start the process and being shuffled through so many entities, the last being a private business association to which regular citizens don't have any direct contact or access. And along the way, they're told to repeat the query, document the issue multiple times, and, of course, be patient.

Yes, most entities along the way have expressed empathy. They've even related their own stories of similar issues or frustrations.

But I'm empathizing here with my friend and neighbor Estela's wearying journey through this process, and calling on all of you in public service to genuinely hear her, and our, collective frustration with a process that seems to keep residents at a deliberate distance while regularly bending over backwards to protect and advocate for commercial concerns over people's needs.

In this instance, no business owner will be held accountable for their patrons' behavior. No cost will accrue to an individual bar or restaurant for the actual cleanup expense and effort. No policy change will result in impacts being brought to or felt by the businesses responsible.

Sadly, this is all-too emblematic of how residents' concerns are frequently unresolved through proffered channels and lack of follow-up, such that the lesson becomes "don't bother."

Do you want help? Invite us into the process as active stakeholders, and listen. Then act.

I ask this genuinely:

Are we unreasonable to expect better engagement and results from our elected officials and governmental agencies? To want clearer and more efficient processes? To expect more direct and timely communication? To hope that any individual or department might take ownership of an effort from start to finish and then convey those results to the initiating party in a timely manner? To expect a proactive approach to identifying needs and issues before they become a complaint or series of complaints?

You have hundreds of Belmont Shore residents via the BSRA and the Parking, Not Parklets organizations eager to help improve things on so many fronts. Such an engaged population is typically much desired by any local leader.

How will you make that engagement meaningful? Thank you for your time.

Best regards,
Brian Cochrane

THE LATEST FOLLOWING THAT EMAIL:

July 20: Dede Rossi: "I have it handled and appreciate you tracking this but don't need you to weigh in. I went by there today. Let me get it handle it and hopefully we will all be satisfied with the results.

If something else comes up please email me at bsba@belmontshore.org
Dede Rossi

July 20: Estela to Dede: "Dede,
I take it you know now that the second photo is in front of 179 Pomona and the third photo is in the parking lot nearest the south side of Second Street, also facing the same 179 Pomona house.

I am taken aback that you are telling a citizen he doesn't need to weigh in. That statement is way out of line.

Wow! Words fail me.
Estela Tejjidor

July 20: Suzie Price to Estela: "Estela, I don't think she meant it that way. I really don't. Trust me, I see what she's doing on the other end and she's holding people accountable and trying to take care of the issue. She's got an uphill battle. Don't forget she is doing BSBA a favor but working with them until they find a permanent person. She gets things done and I believe she's working very hard for all of us.

Sincerely, Suzie Price

July 22: Suzie Price to Brian Cochrane: "Brian, thank you for the detailed summary of our communications. Your point as well noted. I will say that while our council office team was very engaged, we were unable to get the issue taken care of as quickly as it should have been taken care of and that probably has to do with the coordination of multiple departments.

I will make sure to connect with the city manager (who I have copied here) on this specific issue because when requests are made from the council office, we want to make sure that the task is followed through. And in this case, it seems like our council team was very engaged but unfortunately, was not able to deliver results through our requests.

I understand your frustration and I thank you for bringing it to our attention.

Tom (Modica), when you get a moment, can you pull the history on this request from our Council team and let me know when you have a few minutes to talk.

Sincerely,
Suzie Price

July 23: Estela to Suzie et al: "Hi Susie,

To update you on this, the Belmont Shore Business Association came out to oversee a cleaning, but unfortunately it was not sufficient.

Only one of the three spots looks differently than before the cleaning took place, and unfortunately a large stain still remain. The other two messes do not look any different.

I know that the BSBA is on this and will come back to power wash, but please understand that the situation is largely unchanged.

Please find time stamp photos that I took after the Thursday cleaning.

I agree with you that we need a much faster response to this type of problem as it's been weeks since these messes occurred and they have been baking into the sidewalk and parking lot in the sun.

We also need to decide on the appropriate manner to clean these messes. We should start with a power wash and do so on a timely basis after the incident occurs.

Also, Tom Modica, city manager, was not copied on this email thread. You may want to reach out to him again.

Estela Tejidor

July 23: Suzie to Estela et al: "Thank you so much. I've shared the concerns with Tom and forwarded Brian's email from the other day to him. I was also out there this morning walking the entire corridor and all of the parking lots in the back myself and have made a request for more cleaning.

I also interacted with a lot of Conservation Corps workers today and they appeared to be doing a good job with their manual sweeping on second St.. But, they need to do a much better job in the parking lots. I'll be reaching out to their Director about that on Monday.

I agree that this needs to be the focus of attention right now and we are going to step up our efforts by helping the parking commission with their contract for this service Let's just try to continue communicating with one another and figuring out where the adjustments need to be made as we move forward.

Sincerely, Suzie Price

July 24: Estela to Suzie: "Well, Suzie, in regard to your last sentence, one big adjustment that would cut down on this problem of over-served patrons throwing up on Second Street and side streets would be to stop Belmont Shore's transition to the overcrowded party hub that it has become.

I have lived here for three decades and can state unequivocally that the incidence of noise, vermin and public health violations are nothing like I've ever seen. And, not surprisingly, they coincide with the parklets.

Let's just halt the parklets in Belmont Shore.

I guarantee that public vomiting, vermin, noise and ADA violations will be dramatically reduced. Not to mention alleviating the lack of parking and the negative impacts to traffic safety and the surrounding community.

We as a community are now engaged in the ridiculous pursuit of trying to ameliorate the very negative symptoms of the parklets — Let's clean the streets more often, let's build a parking structure, let's exterminate vermin, let's have two police officers on the beat on Friday and Saturday nights until 3 a.m., let's have resident permit parking, let's have a shuttle bus from Second and PCH to Belmont Shore — while ignoring that it's the parklets and the unchecked pursuit of profits by bars and restaurants that have created these conditions.

There are very good reasons why the businesses on Second Street, the Parking Commission and city officials had opposed parklets in the area for over a dozen years.

Those concerns have become tangible and pervasive under the temporary parklets program that the city failed to effectively oversee.

Rather than try to ameliorate after the fact when a permanent parklets program takes hold and can't be undone, use your voice and leadership now to halt all parklets in Belmont Shore.

IMAGES:





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