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1438 Caledonia St  
La Crosse, WI 54603

January 19, 2015

The Honorable Dale J. Hexom  
Director of Public Works  
City of La Crosse  
400 La Crosse St  
La Crosse, WI 54601

Ref: Ref No: 14107

Dear Mr. Hexom,

I want to thank the Board of Public Work to extend my hearing. The nature of what City chief Inspector David Reinhart and his crew have done to me and my family was very emotional and traumatized. My family and me have been treated like we were a drug dealer. We felt that we were being single out because we are Hmong.

I live in La Crosse since January 1997. La Crosse use to be an affordable place for rental property but now the rental property is sky rocket. As a disadvantage family like me have difficulty finding a place for rent. The property tax in La Crosse is very high compare to other cities in the coulee region. I have been lay-off and work temporally and continue seeking employment and struggled to meet end needs. I raise four children as single parent and live in this two bed room home without basement. My two sons sleep in the living room. I build the open lean roof to store my usable items to free space in the house for my family.

When the city inspector wrote me the order, he did not specified what items were junks so I did not know what to get rid off and what to save. The order asked me to remove nuisance which consider junks but what I have were not junks, they are my items that still being used. This was the reason I wrote to the Board of Public Work to argue my case. In the past, the city inspector had sent me memo to remove junk usually a notice attach with a picture of the junk request to remove. This city inspector David also send a notice to removed my dead car in December 8, 2014 requesting to remove it by December 15, 2014 along with a photo so I knew what it was and took care of it per his direction. However, for the items I stored under my lean roof he did not provide me any photos to what he considers as nuisance and that was the reason I request a meeting with the Board of Public Work.

The city inspector was very rude. He brought a police officer, two trucks, and three people to knock my door in the early morning to take my properties without letting me and my family knows. My wife were very scare and frighten. My wife called me at my work. I was terrified and called Bob Watistki who is a veteran and work closely with the Hmong community to see if

he can talk to the city inspector to why they did that to me and my family. Bob told me to call him when I got home and I did. The city inspector and his crew were already putting my items in their truck and trailer. I was in tear and frighten. I called Bob and get my phone to the city inspector. The city inspector stopped his crew after spoke to Bob for about 10 minutes, gave me a business card and they left. I learned from the business card that the city inspector's name is David Reinhart, the chief inspector. I thought he is the regular city inspector that substituted Brent the city inspector that I work with in my ward. Brent is a friendly and very helpful. I have his phone number in my cell phone. The past city inspectors also friendly and helpful.

The below reasons are what let me to belief that my family and I was treated differently because of our race and skin:

1. I wrote a letter to the Board of Public Work on the matter after I received the city notice, the matter was placed on the Board of Public Work meeting agenda in advance before the action of the chief inspector came to take away my properties. My request for hearing was placed on the Board of Public Work meeting but was being pulled off from the agenda before city inspector came to take my properties. I went to the public work office to ask the location of the city store my stuff. I show her the letter that I send to Board of Public Work. The lady in the reception told me that my item have been removed from the agenda by the city inspector. The receptionist asked me to copy my letter again. This action was done so that Chief Inspector David Reinhart can take the action he took and made me look like I failed to comply with the order so the city inspector could move forward with his plan. Chief Inspector David Reinhart, his crew along with a police officer came to take my properties after the hearing that my request was being pulled- off from the Board of Public Work meeting. This was purposefully calculated action per my view.
2. The items I placed under my open lean-to-roof were not junks. They are usable items just like other items of my neighbors. The items were:
  - a. A machine washer
  - b. A bloom
  - c. A CD shelve
  - d. A book case
  - e. A wooden sheets
  - f. A exercise bikes
  - g. A bag of concrete
  - h. A set of 2x3 woods studs
  - i. Several concrete blocks
  - j. My garden sticks set nicely on the tree nicely since 1997.
  - k. Buckets
  - l. Windows
  - m. A concrete bag
3. As I went around my neighborhoods after the city took away my properties, I found similar items place on their back yards similar to my situation and that is alright for them but mine is

not. I feel that this is a double standard between me as a Hmong family and the rest of my White neighbors. Please refer to the following exhibits for your own comparison.



Exhibit 1: My open lean roofs. The bigger lean on the right built before Mayor Matt Harter's time. It was ok then but not ok now. I own this duplex house since I move to La Crosse.



Exhibit 2.1 : Items I stored under my open lean roof that have been taken away by La Crosse City Inspection Department





Exhibit 2.2: City inspector and his crew moved some items to this side of the open lean that the condition is not as dry as the other side of the open lean roof



Exhibit 2.3: This is this other open lean that items were taken away, it was dry and clean.



**Other houses that have similar items like my house that the city inspector did not take them away as he took my properties per my view:**



**Exhibit 3: 1633 Avon St**



**Exhibit 4: Charles and Logan St Corner Alley**





Exhibit 5: Behind Alley of **1511 Avon St**



Exhibit 6: **1617 Onalaska Court Alley** (old car). This old car is ok but my old car was not



**Exhibit 7: 1810 Kane St** (it is ok to store items in this open lean roof but it was not ok for me to store properties under my open lean roof. My properties may not be the same as others, however, they are still my usable properties are not junks and the city inspectors take it as junks.



**Exhibit 8: 710 North St**





Exhibit 9: Open lean canopy storage on **George** similar to mine



Exhibit 10: **1317 and 1716 Charles Alley**





Exhibit 11: 1617 Onalaska Court Alley



Exhibit 12: Onalaska Ct and Moore Alley



4. City inspector treated my properties as junks and therefore it was dumped as junks even though I still need them.



Exhibit 13: Items city inspector and his crew took away



Exhibit 14: Items city inspector and his crew took away in addition to items on exhibit 13





Exhibit 15: This was how the city dumped my properties that I still needed



Exhibit 16: This is how city dumped my book shell



Exhibit 17: My garden sticks and my concrete mansion cement. My garden sticks were put under my tree nicely since 1997. Garden is my hobby.

5. It took me and my son couple days and several hours to re-claimed my properties.







The cost to re-claim my properties and properties that were broken under the care of the city inspector and his crew:

Clean up service by me and my son first day:

Son 5 hours labor at \$12 a hour $5 \times 12 =$	\$60
Me, 5 hours labor at \$15 a hour $5 \times 15 =$	\$75

Clean up service by me second day:

7 hours labor at \$15 a hour $7 \times 15 =$	\$105
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Items Broken:

Washer Machine	\$250
Book Case	\$50
CD Wood Case	\$30
A gallon of anti-freeze	\$8
Two windows	\$50

<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$628</b>
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Under the circumstance the La Crosse City Inspector and his crew had done to me, my family, and my properties, I am asking the Board of Public Work dismissed the charge the city claimed of removing my properties that the city inspector claimed they are junks which they are not to me, fee and permit. They are my valuable items that I still need and re-claim those that were not being broken.

I want to thank for the public work department secretary who acted very friendly, helped me and guided me. She provided me the direction and called the street department to arrange a time for me to pick up my properties. I was sadden and tearful to see the city to come take away my properties, careless which caused damages.

It is my hope that each of the member of the Board of Public Work take the time to examine what the city inspector had done to me and my family and make a fair decision that each of you will make for yourself. I will work with the city inspection department to ensure my addition of the open lean roof is safe and meet the city code.

If any one of you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. My cellular phone is: 608-386-6284. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,



Chue Peter Thao

CC.      La Crosse Apartment and Home Owners Association, Inc.  
        Thai Vue, Wisconsin United Coalition of Mutual Assistance Associations, Inc.  
        Bob Watestki  
        Dempsey Miller, City Council Member  
        Andrea Richmond, City Council Member