

Alexa Iles Skarpelos, President
David Brewer, Vice President
Kelly Ziegler, Treasurer
Jan Hohenstein, Secretary



August 10, 2020

Mayor Eric Garcetti
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Ongoing Homelessness Crisis in Los Angeles

Dear Mayor Garcetti:

The Hollywood Dell Civic Association is a non-profit, all-volunteer neighborhood association. We represent over 1,100 households and our Mission is to enhance life in the Hollywood Dell, represent Dell interests to governmental and commercial entities and support projects and organizations that make a positive contribution to the community. The residents of the Hollywood Dell are active and engaged in civic matters, and we are proud of our high voter turnout, especially for local elections.

For years now, we have discussed, debated and deliberated about the increasing problems of the un-housed, and the dangerous aspects of the encampments in our community. We have heard from numerous officials about the lawsuits and judgments that have forced the City of LA to allow people experiencing homelessness to camp out on public sidewalks. We understand that criminalizing poverty is not helpful, and that until there are enough shelter beds, allowing tents on sidewalks was a way to deal with the problem, temporarily. We voted to fund solutions, approving \$1.2 billion dollars in 2016 for Prop HHH to build 10,000 units of housing. By the end of 2019, not one bond-funded unit had opened. Despite spending \$600+ million a year on homelessness, the problem has in fact, worsened.

Now we are in the midst of a global pandemic, with the spread of COVID-19 in Los Angeles at alarming rates. Our residents were hopeful that perhaps a silver lining was the acceleration of housing the homeless via Project Room Key and other efforts. But still, the encampments around our neighborhood have grown significantly and the regular sanitation cleanups ceased. We were told that the CDC had advised the City to allow encampment dwellers to "self-isolate" in their tents, rather than a congregate setting. Yet if you drive by any of these encampments there are people living and engaging each other in close proximity, amidst garbage and filth with no sanitation facilities.

Hollywood Dell Civic Association, P.O. Box 93094 Hollywood, CA 90093-0122

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While we recognize and respect the civil liberties of those who are experiencing homelessness, how is allowing these conditions respectful? What about the rights of the general public to use the public streets and sidewalks safely? No one can pass on either side of Gower, south of Franklin Avenue. The tents and debris from the sprawling encampment completely cover the sidewalks and traffic median and spill into the street, endangering public safety. This is unacceptable. Our neighborhood falls within Council District 4, yet we have a massive impact from literally across the street, within Council District 13. Our residents become frustrated as they contact their representative in the City Council only to be told "that's not in our district." Well, it IS within your city Mr. Mayor.

Accepting these sprawling encampments throughout Los Angeles as a permanent reality is not okay. The residents of Los Angeles deserve accountability from our city government. As taxpayers we have agreed to fund the programs and agencies under your direction to do our part to assist you in finding real and lasting solutions. As human beings we should be doing everything we can to relieve the suffering of those who are living this way. What is your plan and timeline for solving this?

Sincerely,

Alexa Iles Skarpelos

President
Hollywood Dell Civic Association