

Dear Honorable Members,

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council (“DLANC”) requests that the following Community Impact Statement be added in support of Council File 15-1138-S1, as forceful call to address the homelessness crisis within our city. When DLANC communicates with its stakeholders, such as through Outreach Committee efforts to engage the Downtown LA neighborhood, their primary concern is the unacceptable and deplorable conditions to which people experiencing homelessness are subjected while living on the streets of Los Angeles. This concern is amplified for Skid Row and the surrounding area, and encompasses the undeniable and deleteriousness implications the homelessness crisis has on everyone in our neighborhood. When the Outreach Committee has conducted informal surveys with stakeholders, many say that homelessness is the number one problem facing the community.

While we appreciate City Council is not ignoring the problem, and has taken steps under Proposition HHH, Measure H, and the Comprehensive Homeless Strategy to formally devote more attention to this matter, DLANC must once again go on record to state that an ethical and effective solution is urgent.

Over one year ago, the LA County Supervisor described the results of the 2017 Homeless Count as “staggering.”¹ And despite the massive investments made by the City and County to address homelessness, there is little hope the results of the 2018 Homeless Count will be any different. Indeed, it has long been known that Los Angeles is considered “the homeless capital of America.”² DLANC itself submitted a Community Impact Statement to Council File 17-1092, decrying the unconscionable public sanitation, hygiene, and health crisis facing Skid Row residents. The rise of encampments in public spaces has created serious health and safety concerns for those experiencing homelessness, as well as the rest of the neighborhood, from businesses to residents to visitors. Some encampments fully block public sidewalks, risking non-compliance with accessibility and disability laws. Individuals with difficulty walking cannot even pass such encampments, while other pedestrians are forced to the streets, which is an unacceptably dangerous situation for pedestrians and vehicles alike.

Despite the gravity of the situation—or perhaps because of it—more can and must be done. We know that the public cost of someone experiencing homelessness is roughly five-times greater than simply providing supporting housing.³ And we know those principles apply in LA, where studies show that for every \$1 invested in a housing and support program, LA County government saved \$1.20 in health care and other social service costs.⁴

¹ <http://hahn.lacounty.gov/supervisor-hahns-statement-2017-homeless-count-results/>

² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-40115541>

³ <https://economicrt.org/publication/where-we-sleep/>

⁴ <https://www.rand.org/news/press/2017/12/05/index1.html>

DLANC and the diverse community it represents believe the City must treat the homelessness crisis with an even deeper sense of urgency than it has shown. Moreover, we demand ethical, compassionate, and practical actions that will result in significant and measurable improvements to the lives of those experiencing homelessness, and thus the whole Downtown LA community.

Committee Motion: The Outreach Committee of the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council (“DLANC”) recommends that DLANC should submit a Community Impact Statement in support of Council File 15-1138-S1, which declares that the City must urgently make its top priority solving the homelessness crisis in an ethical, compassionate, and practical manner.

Sincerely,

Ariana Nussdorf

DLANC Fashion District Resident Director

DLANC Outreach Committee Co-Chair

Nate Johnson

(add titles)