



January 27, 2016

Homelessness & Poverty Committee
Councilmember Marqueece Harris- Dawson, Co-Chair
Councilmember Jose Huizar, Co-Chair
Councilmember Mike Bonin
Councilmember Gilbert Cedillo
Councilmember Current D. Price, Jr.
200 N. Spring Street, Room 340
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Council File 15-1138-S1, Comprehensive Homeless Strategy

Dear Councilmembers,

Established in 1924, the Central City Association (CCA) is Los Angeles's premier business advocacy organization, with 450 members employing over 350,000 people in the Los Angeles region. CCA represents a broad swath of the businesses that drive the Los Angeles economy and knows its continued success is dependent upon the ability to tackle complex issues such as homelessness. CCA commends the City for the Comprehensive Homeless Strategy and believes it is an excellent report with strong recommendations.

CCA is focused on short-term and long-term solutions addressing homelessness and we are encouraged by the City and County's partnership. These recommendations are offered as short-term solutions to address the serious homeless crisis facing the City.

Short-term recommendations

- **Fund Additional Outreach Workers-** The City needs additional outreach workers who are connecting homeless individuals to appropriate services and housing.
- **Keep the Winter Shelters Open Year-Round & 24 Hours a Day-** The City has 861 existing winter shelter beds and an additional 440 winter shelter surge beds available for inclement weather. These existing resources should be fully maximized. CCA believes they should be open all day and year-round and they should offer supportive services. This would make it easier to locate individuals and help them secure housing. These facilities should also be considered as possible storage locations for homeless individual's personal property.
- **Fund Urgent Care Beds to Treat Mentally Ill Homeless-** The LAPD estimates 30-40% of arrestees have a mental illness. Many of these individuals are taken to jail or the emergency room and not connected with appropriate services. There are currently five urgent care centers in the County of Los Angeles and LAPD has begun to utilize them as an alternative to jail or ER but people can only stay for 23 hours. There needs to be more specialized bridge housing options

for people with mental illness. It takes an average of 90 days to move homeless individuals from a shelter to permanent housing. Due to a decision from HUD, LAHSA will stop funding 2,000 transitional housing beds in 2016. The City should utilize this existing resource and allocate funds accordingly.

- **Utilize City Owned Property to Open New Storage Facilities**-The City should leverage this existing resource to provide citywide storage for homeless individuals' personal property.
- **Adopt the Draft Ordinance Amending Section 56.11 of Los Angeles Municipal Code**- CCA supports the draft ordinance as amended by the Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee on January 25, 2016 and believes it strikes a balance between balancing the rights of all community members including homeless individuals.
- **Fund Additional Environmental Compliance Officers (ECO)** - Currently there are 16 ECO's and an additional four being trained. This represents 20 ECO's citywide. CCA is concerned this is not sufficient numbers of persons to maintain sidewalks and other public areas in a safe and clean condition.

We hope you will prioritize these items as you deliberate the Comprehensive Homeless Strategy. CCA is committed to partnering with the City and County to support solutions to address homelessness.

Sincerely,



Carol E. Schatz
President & CEO