

HISTORIC HIGHLAND PARK NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
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<http://www.highlandparknc.com>
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CITY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT
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July 16, 2015

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti and the
Members of the Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Need to declare a state of emergency on homelessness and housing in Los Angeles

Dear Mayor Garcetti and Members of the City Council,

The Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council represents over 60,000 Los Angeles stakeholders who reside, own property, or conduct business in our neighborhood. These include increasing numbers of homeless people – men, women and children – some of whom are vets, others who have addiction issues or psychological problems, a number of whom have lived in this area for many years and do not wish to be moved elsewhere.

The recent census indicated there are now over 40,000 homeless on the streets (and parks and arroyos) of Los Angeles, a 12% increase from two years ago. As there were no professionals involved, those making the count did not venture into unlit and potentially dangerous areas and an unknown number of the unhoused are NOT included in that number.

Of those counted, there are over 4,000 vets (47% from the Vietnam War but an increasing number from more recent conflicts). A veteran's commission report states that almost 50% of the homeless veterans in Los Angeles will still be on the streets after the Mayor's deadline of December 31, 2015.

Some of our stakeholders feel compassion, others fear the homeless or think they threaten our businesses and our personal safety, most want to help. Band-aid remedies like bulldozing encampments or moving these people into transient hotels downtown may remove them temporarily but have never worked as a long term solution.

HHPNC/Declare a state of emergency on homelessness and housing

The reality is that Los Angeles does not currently underwrite the resources necessary to adequately care for and transition these people into suitable housing, and provide a path to bring them back from their current lives to become contributing members of our community.

Furthermore, with increases in rental and house purchase costs across the board and the lack of rental housing inventory, addressing the need for affordable housing has now become crucial not only for the homeless but for the working poor and middle class.

Therefore, the Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council respectfully requests that the Mayor and City Council immediately declare a state of emergency on homelessness in the City of Los Angeles, and open a Council File to examine and develop a viable five year plan, including engaging the participation of the County, State, and Federal governments, in order to effectively provide the services necessary to systematically reduce homelessness in our City and address the chronic issue of rental housing inventory and affordable housing in our City.

Sincerely,



Monica Alcaraz, President
Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council