

DOWNTOWN WOMEN'S CENTER



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Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
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CF#17-1422

Dear Los Angeles City Council,

The Downtown Women's Center (DWC) is writing to voice our strong support for the Permanent Supportive Housing ordinance. As the only organization exclusively dedicated to helping women overcome homelessness and poverty in Skid Row, we know that long term solutions to end homelessness for the tens of thousands of Angelenos sleeping in shelters, in their cars, and on the streets of our city must include increased development of permanent supportive housing. Approving this ordinance is the only way we can build the 1,000 additional units Los Angeles has promised under Prop HHH.

The homelessness crisis is visible throughout Los Angeles, and data shows it has worsened in recent years. The number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles City increased by 20% in 2016 alone. With the passage of Prop HHH and Measure H, LA voters have shown they want to take action to end homelessness. The Permanent Supportive Housing ordinance is critical to delivering on the promises of Prop HHH – it creates a streamlined planning process that removes unnecessary barriers to developing homes specifically for individuals experiencing homelessness, significantly reducing the time it takes developers to begin construction on permanent supportive housing projects. Moreover, this ordinance will adjust planning regulations to meet unique needs of permanent supportive housing units (without compromising quality and existing zoning requirements), saving taxpayers up to one million dollars on each project.

For women experiencing homelessness, a population that experiences staggeringly high rates of trauma, low-barrier access to permanent housing is crucial. According to the Downtown Women's Action Coalition's 2016 Needs Assessment, more than 90% of women living in Skid Row have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence during their lifetime. Based on 40 years of experience ending women's homelessness, we know the only long-term solution to this tragedy is to find more efficient strategies for developing safe, permanent housing.

We ask for your support in removing barriers and providing incentives to develop more of this housing by approving the Permanent Supportive Housing ordinance. Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Anne Miskey
Chief Executive Officer
Downtown Women's Center