

MOTION

Scattered Site Homeless Housing

As the City of Los Angeles designs and implements critical public health measures to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the homelessness crisis is an area of particular concern. On March 18, 2020, at the start of the City's emergency period, State models predicted that at least 60,000 homeless people could be infected by the coronavirus, with up to 20 percent of them needing hospitalization. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) explains that homeless people are vulnerable to the disease because sleeping outdoors often does not provide protection from the environment, adequate access to hygiene and sanitation facilities, or connection to services and healthcare; and because those living in overcrowded shelters are unable to maintain proper social distancing. As of April 18, 2020, nearly 60,000 people were living without permanent shelter in the County of Los Angeles, as reported by the Los Angeles Times. In an effort to prevent a surge of coronavirus cases in the homeless community, City and County officials, with the guidance of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), set the goal in March of moving an unprecedented 15,000 people out of overcrowded shelters and encampments and into hotel rooms.

The urgency of the coronavirus pandemic, compounded by the City's severe homelessness crisis, warrants an investigation into the possibility of supplementing hotel shelters with a "scattered site" program. Scattered-site housing programs place homeless individuals in already-existing homes and apartments in the private market and provide ongoing supportive services to prevent residents from falling back into homelessness. Scattered-site programs are currently being employed in the City by organizations such as Brilliant Corners, which has housed over 7,000 people since 2014. Brilliant Corner's Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool operates under a public-private partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services to secure a broad range of residences, including individual apartments, blocks of units or entire buildings. Brilliant Corners demonstrates that scattered-site programs may be effective in reducing homelessness throughout the City while preventing the coronavirus from spreading through the unsheltered community. The scattered-site model provides an opportunity for the City to investigate strategies for re-housing the homeless population while simultaneously making use of unused and undervalued vacant homes.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Housing and Community Investment Department, with the assistance of LAHSA and the City Administrative Officer, to report on the feasibility of implementing a scattered-site homeless housing program to utilize underused or unused privately owned single family and multi-family residences throughout the City, and any sources of funding available to support the proposed program.

PRESENTED BY: _____



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