



NCVV Sponsors Town Hall on Homelessness June 27

Neighborhoods across Los Angeles are currently facing one of the biggest challenges in the history of our city: homelessness. This is the nexus of many factors including financial pressures facing families, economic dislocation, a lack of good paying jobs, the sky-high price of housing, reduced health and mental health services, and the inadequate supply of entry level and permanent housing solutions, among others.

On any given night over 34,000 people in our city are homeless. The number has risen by almost 20% since 2016. Our City Council office estimates that more than 1,200 of those homeless people live in Council District 2. And of that number, less than thirty (or just 2%) had a roof over their head last night. That means 98% were under a tent or some other temporary shelter.

We often see these people in Valley Village: tent camps erected at freeway access points, people sleeping in our park and along the Wash, persons asking for assistance from vehicles on our major roads, and, of course, the issue of campers that become legal permanent housing by parking at the intersection of Laurel Canyon and Chandler Boulevard.

These are the obvious manifestations of homelessness in our community. But there are many others we can't see. Families doubling up in small apartments because they can't afford adequate housing, those who are living with a friend or neighbor because their income won't cover rent, and long-time residents displaced from Valley Village because of loss of an affordable apartment due to the sale of rent controlled units – these are faces that should also be counted. They are men, women and children who are literally on the margins and are possibly just steps from being officially homeless.

Your NCVV Board has been working with local and state officials, LAPD, community organizations and others to find solutions. But the task is daunting and answers have not come easily. The City of Los Angeles took a big step in 2016 to address the issue of homelessness by approving Measure HHH and we agreed to tax ourselves to pay for it. Likewise the County committed to solutions through approval of Measure HH which added much needed support for social services. The City and the County are now working in conjunction to address the factors causing homelessness and will use these funds to initiate real changes.

This crisis will span many years and there will be many pieces to eventual solutions. We need affordable housing, temporary shelters, job assistance, better health and mental health care, and more.

The NCVV Town Hall on Homelessness is an opportunity for our stakeholders to hear from city and community leaders about efforts that are underway and solutions that are planned for the future. It is also an opportunity for our city's leadership to hear about the concerns our stakeholders have for our safety and for our quality of life in Valley Village.

It will be a dialogue, and we hope you will join us in the conversation on June 27.