

Sherman Oaks Homeless Housing Locations. The Sherman Oaks Homeowners' Association (SOHA) Homelessness Committee joined with the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council (SONC) to help identify locations within Sherman Oaks for either permanent supportive housing or temporary bridge housing. Homelessness is the single biggest issue throughout the City and community leaders and organizations throughout the City are being asked to step up and help identify locations. Since the need for this housing is immediate, the City has tasked these leaders and organizations to look for properties that are relatively easy to secure which usually means a publicly-owned site. SOHA and SONC identified two possible locations, both of which are publicly-owned with one location at Sepulveda Boulevard north of Magnolia Boulevard and the other site at Sepulveda Boulevard and Dickens Street. Both locations were identified with the understanding that they were preliminary and required a considerable amount of public vetting including passing a feasibility analysis by the City Administrative Office (CAO).

Councilman Ryu presented these sites in a press release/email announcement in early August 2018. Both locations, especially the location at Sepulveda and Dickens, have met with a great deal of opposition by many residents who live near this site. Many of the concerns include crime, drug use, mental illness, traffic and a general belief that these facilities will be unsecured and unsafe. Councilman Ryu has, since his initial announcement of the sites, done a tremendous amount of outreach, holding several small group meetings and a large community-wide meeting held at Notre Dame High School on Thursday, September 20, 2018, attended by several hundred residents. At that community-wide meeting, the Councilman and his staff provided an overview of the process emphasizing that the two sites were just preliminary locations. Several social services agencies, government officials, and affordable housing developers were also in attendance to discuss the particulars related to homelessness and affordable housing developments.

SOHA is responsive to the Sherman Oaks residents' concerns, especially the ones voiced by those who live nearest to the proposed two locations. SOHA shares some of those concerns expressed, particularly Councilman Ryu's press release/email announcement that made it sound as if these sites had already been selected without the necessary community involvement. SOHA, however, believes that most concerns can be addressed while allowing the proposed development of the two locations to continue forward. As a leader in the community, SOHA believes that if it is determined that one or both sites are feasible, the Dickens site should be developed for a **senior citizens only** permanent supportive housing development and the Sepulveda south of Magnolia site be developed as bridge housing for **families with children only**. In this way, the community concerns will be mitigated, not only through good design and site planning, but also by limiting the homeless to certain demographics like seniors and families with children.

While the concerns voiced by those residents and stakeholders in opposition to the two locations are loud, angry and unrelenting, there are many voices in our community in support of helping provide local solutions to this housing crisis. While these voices in support are not loud nor angry, they are strong in their desire to find assistance for those less fortunate in our society as these homeless people are. The homeless throughout the City are in desperate need for our society to step up and provide local, state and federal solutions to this crisis. And in the words of Councilman Mike Bonin of the City's

Eleventh District when he appeared on NBC's Dateline on August 19, 2018: "I get the frustration of the people who are angry about encampments in their neighborhoods. I absolutely get it. I have to walk my kid to school in the morning and there is often someone sleeping on the sidewalk. I get the frustration but the solutions to homelessness can't be more objectionable than homelessness itself."

Finally, with a continuing community dialogue and comprehensive involvement by all residents and stakeholders within our area, Sherman Oaks will find a local solution to the homeless plight that is agreeable to most and can hopefully be regarded as a model for other communities within the City of Los Angeles.