LA County Board of Supervisors Motion for Comprehensive Affordable Housing Plan

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SCAPH Supports LA County Board of Supervisors Motion for Comprehensive Affordable Housing Plan

Supervisors Sheila Kuehl and Mark Ridley-Thomas have unveiled a comprehensive plan for a major new and continuing County financial commitment with a goal of providing $100 million annually toward homelessness and affordable housing programs. The money would be dedicated to creating and operating both short and long-term affordable housing for a variety of vulnerable populations.

Los Angeles County’s shortage of affordable and available homes for very low income and extremely low income families (those making $18,900 or less per year) has grown to 527,722 homes, up from 496,540 homes last year. An average renter would need to earn $38.77 an hour to afford average asking rents. When the high cost of housing is considered, Los Angeles County has one of the highest poverty rates in the nation at 26% or one in four households.

Decreased funding, particularly the loss of redevelopment housing funds by the County, has intensified the crisis. There is a strong need for renewed regional investments in affordable homes.

The proposal by Supervisors Sheila Kuehl and Mark Ridley-Thomas, is contained in a motion calendared for consideration at the Board of Supervisors’ meeting on October 27, 2015, and emphasizes that this effort will complement new funding for new programs, not merely repurposing existing money or supplanting current housing programs.

“We’re in the middle of a housing affordability crisis, the growing number of people homeless in the streets of Los Angeles demonstrates there’s an emergency in the County,” says Dora Galdato, Chief Executive Officer of a Community of Friends, a SCAPH member organization. “We need to prevent families from falling into homelessness by creating more homes that are affordable and we need to provide rapid rehousing to homeless older adults to permanent housing for those who do fall into it.”

A Community of Friends is a non-profit developer of supportive housing with projects in all five supervisory districts serving hundreds of individuals and families, including veterans, seniors, and transitional age youth within the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd LA County supervisory districts.

That is why this motion is so critical — it provides the stable, long-term and substantial funding that makes it possible for the development community to provide these homes.

The proposal contains several key components:

1) Creates an Affordable Housing Program budget unit, beginning with $20 million in FY 2015-16 and scaling up to $100 million annually by FY 2020-21, with its own identified revenue stream, and at least 75% of its spending dedicated specifically to produce new or preserve existing affordable housing for very low or extremely low income or homeless households.

2) Creates an Affordable Housing Coordinating Committee, comprising representatives from various County departments, ranging from the Chief Executive Officer and County Housing Authority to various health, social service and law enforcement agencies. A separate Executive Committee would guide the Coordinating Committee’s work.

3) Establishes an Annual Affordable Housing Outcomes Report, offering policy recommendations, gap analysis and outcomes information on all of the County’s various affordable housing investments and programs.

If the motion wins approval, Kuehl said, she expects County officials to return within roughly five months with detailed plans for establishing the housing fund, identifying sources, and refining the metrics behind the annual affordable housing report. A link to the motion is located at http://supervisorsmtl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Affordable-Housing_C0215.pdf

All attendees are encouraged to register at www.scaph.org/register for the hearings.

PRESS EVENT

Strong Visions: Hundreds of community members and advocates for affordable homes will be in attendance at the County Board hearings. Speakers will include clergy, nonprofit developers, residents of nonprofit developments, formerly homeless, and community leaders.

The Southern California Association of Non Profit Housing (SCAPH) and our nonprofit developers will be available to media to discuss the LA County Motion and address the critical issues of affordable housing in Los Angeles County, immediately following the LA County Board of Supervisors vote.

Time: Tuesday, October 27, 2015 (time tbd)
Location: Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 W Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012 (On the north side of the building facing Temple Street)