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Central Hollywood Neighborhood Council  
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**To:** Eric Garcetti, Mayor

Richard Llewellyn, Jr., City Administrative Officer

Meg Barclay, Chief Administrative Analyst for Homelessness Initiatives

Michael Shull, General Manager, Dept. of Recreation and Parks

Mitch O'Farrell, Councilmember, 13th District

David Ryu, Councilmember, 4th District

**Re:** Reopening the Hollywood Rec Center Shelter

July 30, 2020

Dear City Officials,

While SPA4's total unsheltered population rose 1% from 2019 to 2020, Central Hollywood's rose 6%.<sup>1</sup> Thus, despite the welcome addition of bridge housing, our community continues to bear the brunt of the homelessness crisis—a crisis now compounded by a pandemic.

Despite bold initial action by the City, LA is setting COVID diagnosis records four months after the emergency declaration.<sup>2</sup> Mortality is not falling, and LAUSD is committed to stay-at-home schooling in the fall.<sup>3</sup> COVID-19 is thus not an acute perturbation, but a chronic challenge to our municipal systems—one requiring strategies for the next 6 to 12 months, not weeks.

The City recognized this fact early. It implemented a strategy to revamp homeless services under coronavirus by converting otherwise unusable recreation centers into shelters staffed by service providers. This swift action successfully protected hundreds of unhoused people from food/water/hygiene/information shortages caused by restaurant/gym/library closures, and health/mental health/drug treatment gaps caused by care facility closures and reduced street outreach. It was an excellent emergency solution, and is a good template for long-term redesigns.

**Given the above, we are puzzled by the closure of the Hollywood Rec Center Shelter. Since its initial opening, our community has remained disproportionately affected by**

<sup>1</sup>Cf. <https://www.lahsa.org/documents?id=3427-2019-greater-los-angeles-homeless-count-service-planning-area-4.pdf> and <https://www.lahsa.org/documents?id=3427-2020-greater-los-angeles-homeless-count-service-planning-area-4.pdf>. See census tracts 191901, 190700, 190801, 190802, 191810, 191820, 191901 at <https://www.lahsa.org/data?id=13-2019-homeless-count-by-community-city> and <https://www.lahsa.org/data?id=45-2020-homeless-count-by-community-city> for CHNC-specific data.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.latimes.com/projects/california-coronavirus-cases-tracking-outbreak/los-angeles-county/>.

<sup>3</sup><https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/13/us/lausd-san-diego-school-reopening.html>

**homelessness, there have been no positive developments in the pandemic, and the timetable for the facility’s return to recreational use has not accelerated. As such, we can see no reason for the closure of this shelter, which seems to amount to a forfeiture of fruitful ground when the City—now at COVID Threat Level Orange—acknowledges the dangers of retreat.**

**We therefore request that the Hollywood Rec Center Shelter be reopened and remain open at least until LAUSD returns to on-campus schooling or health officials relax the advisories that initially precluded its use for recreation.** Additionally, we ask that all future shelter occupants be drawn from CHNC’s over 450 unsheltered stakeholders. If the above is impossible, we request an explanation for its (continued) closure so that we can educate stakeholders and assist in finding alternatives.

We recognize that there may exist constraints unknown to us. However, that fact does not change the reality that the new status quo will inflict harms to our community that the City has demonstrated are preventable. As an NC, it is our duty to advise you of such potentialities, and it is our strongest desire that you lead the work to avoid them.

Approved  
27 July 2020  
Yea 8  
Nay 0  
Abstain 0  
Recuse 0  
Absent 1