



September 13, 2016

Council File 16-0245

Honorable City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
Los Angeles City Hall
200 North Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Honorable Members,

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council requests that the following Community Impact Statement be added to Council File 16-0245, regarding the Council's effort to mitigate the impact on filming in Downtown Los Angeles caused by construction and development projects.

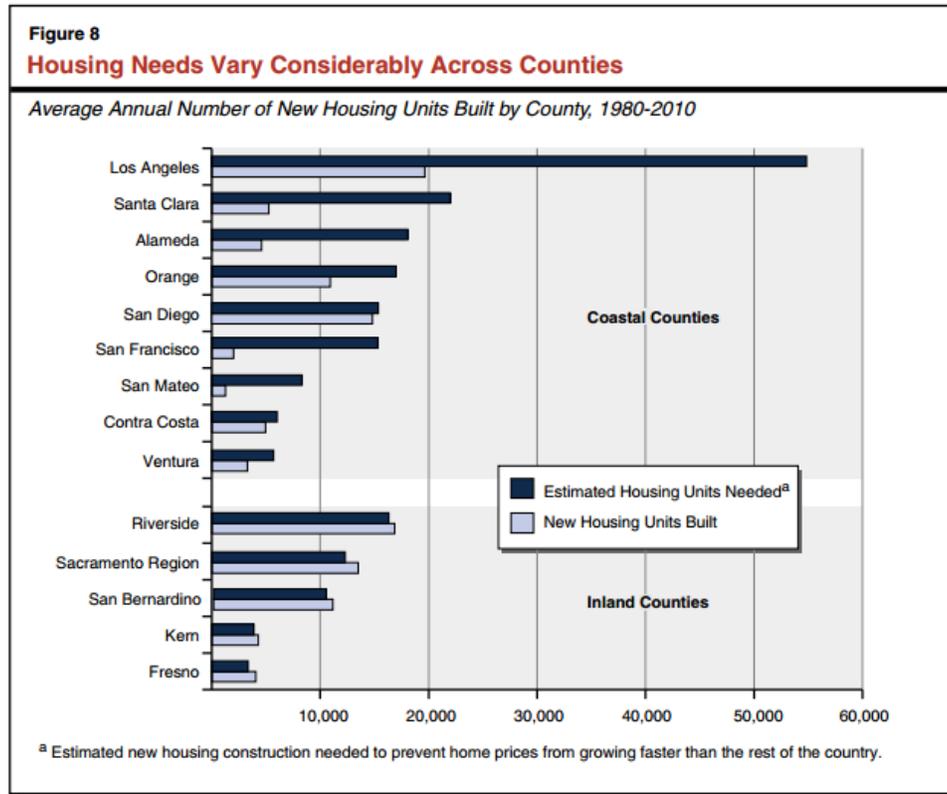
COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council ("DLANC") opposes the City Council's attempt to mitigate any impact to filming that may be caused by construction and development in Downtown. First, it is absurd for the City to consider halting, slowing, or somehow impeding development of housing stock in this City for the sole purpose of coddling the filming industry at a time when this City is in dire and desperate need for housing.¹ Los Angeles is in the midst of a housing crisis.² As such, development of much-needed housing should be this City's highest priority. Indeed, Los Angeles is the least affordable area of the Nation's 381 metropolitan areas.³

¹ <http://lao.ca.gov/reports/2015/finance/housing-costs/housing-costs.pdf>

² <http://www.latimes.com/business/realestate/la-fi-unaffordable-homes-20140821-story.html>

³ "Los Angeles is the least affordable rental market in the country, according to Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies, and it's been ranked the second-least affordable region for middle-class people seeking to buy a home . . . Housing prices in Los Angeles have grown four times faster than incomes since 2000. Not only is Los Angeles the least affordable of the nation's 381 metropolitan areas, as the Harvard study showed, but half of all households in the region are considered 'cost burdened,' meaning that families spend at least 30% of their income on rent or mortgage payments. One in four households spends at least half its income on housing. And it's not just poor families that are struggling. Roughly half of middle-income households were rent burdened in 2011, compared with just 11% in 2000, according to a UCLA analysis. One in three households earning \$50,000 to \$75,000 spend more than a third of their income on rent." <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-affordable-housing-part-1-20150111-story.html>



Second, the businesses and residents of Downtown Los Angeles *already* disproportionately shoulder the burdens and inconveniences caused by filming. It is fundamentally unfair for this Council to now consider ways to further burden our community by halting, slowing, or impeding development of much-needed housing stock. Downtown residents have experienced rent increases year after year, with absolutely no action from this Council in reigning in run-away rent-increases. Asking this community to now shoulder yet another burden is simply unacceptable.

Third, DLANC has informed this Council of prior ills with the filming industry and those ills continue today.⁴ Certain production crews consistently treat residents as an “inconvenience” and continue to abuse their filming permits by improperly exceeding the scope of what is properly permitted. Recent examples of poor conduct include:

- Illegally closing sidewalks without a permit;
- Using off duty/retired police officers to intimidate stakeholders;
- Illegally preventing access to dwellings that are not within the scope of an issued permit;
- Violating generator placement guidelines, thereby resulting in exhaust fumes entering dwellings;

⁴ http://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2014/14-0471_cis_9-9-14.pdf

- Illegally placing “No Parking” signs for parking spots without abiding by the 24-hour notice requirement (*e.g.*, placing “No Parking” signs only two hours before designated time);
- Violating light intrusion guidelines (*e.g.*, bright lights and action scenes going until 4 AM);
- Sexually harass residents and in one instance, the production company failed to assist in submission of a report by refusing to identify the assailant;
- Treating residents with disrespect (*e.g.*, yelling at residents).

While we appreciate and understand that the filming industry is an economic engine for the region, such recognition is not an invitation to welcome abusive and illegal conduct. In other words, recognizing the importance of the filming industry does not equate to giving the industry free reign to act as they wish. As such, DLANC recommends that the following provisions be instituted to improve on-going relations between the industry and the stakeholders of Downtown Los Angeles:

- **Right to Inspection:** Permits should be maintained onsite and should be made available for inspection at all times upon request by any member of the Public;
- **Use of Off-duty Officers:** All off duty/retired police officers who are hired as security should be required to wear yellow vests that state clearly and prominently, “Not Actively On Police Duty”;
- **Adequate Notice:** Residents that reside within 50 yards of a sidewalk, street, or parking space closure, should be notified in writing.

Finally, should the filming industry be concerned about the impact of development, then DLANC suggests the industry consider the following:

- **Purchase a Parking Lot:** The industry should consider purchasing a parking lot that they could use for their parking needs. If purchased, a multi-story parking garage could also be built that would capitalize on the increasing demand for parking. Alternatively, the Council may offer City-owned parking lots to production companies to ensure that the filming industry maintains at least a minimum number of lots to use as “base camps”;
- **Rent Office Space:** The industry should consider renting one of the many abandoned office buildings on Broadway and storing most of their equipment in the leased space. When needed, the equipment may be transported by foot or other means that does not require a “base camp”;
- **Installation of Power Stations:** The industry, with assistance from the Council, should consider installing infrastructure in Downtown that could provide power so that the generator would no longer be needed.

This Community Impact Statement is based on the action taken at the regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting on September 13, 2016, when the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood

Council adopted the following motion and directed that a Community Impact Statement be filed reflecting its position.

Motion: “The Government Liaison Committee recommends that the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council submit a Community Impact Statement opposing Council File 16-0245 insofar as it calls for the halting, slowing, or impeding of residential projects and developments in Downtown Los Angeles.”

Sincerely,

Patricia Berman
DLANC President

Sincerely,

Nate Johnson
DLANC Government Liaison Committee Chair

DRAFT