

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: I'm writing today to urge the Los Angeles City Council to increase the annual budget to preserve affordable housing across Los Angeles, including using eminent domain to preserve expired covenants like Hillside Villa. Instead of funding LAPD recruitment at the expense of every other department and program, please replace them with unarmed crisis responders and use the money to preserve existing low-income housing. It's been proven again and again that additional policing only worsen the violence of the homelessness crisis. Investing in unarmed crisis responders and permanent housing security will create stable and thriving communities. In their May 3 report (CF 23-0311), LAHD identified nearly 6,000 units of affordable housing at risk of expiring in the next five years. There is no solution to this crisis that will not cost money. The choice here is between giving money to slumlords in exchange for weak promises of extending covenants for a few years, or using that money to buy buildings for the public good, keeping people permanently and affordably housed. Purchasing buildings is cost effective because the City will recoup most of the initial cost by transferring the building to non-profit or community control. In the case of Hillside Villa, it is a LOAN. With the rise of many community land trusts across the city, and interest in legislation such as the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act, projects like the purchase of Hillside Villa provide an onramp for long-term tenant control of housing, as well as ensuring stable housing for low-income people in the midst of a state of emergency for homelessness.