



## Skid Row Now & 2040 2020 Vision

*A community plan should be a vision for supporting and responding to the needs of existing neighborhoods, while paving a roadway to a better tomorrow. It should be community-focused, and not driven by business interests or the incongruent placement of buildings to maintain a status quo. With that in mind, we highlight the following principles and vision for the Skid Row neighborhood:*

### **Neighborhood preservation**

**No Net Loss of Affordable Housing:** All existing units must be protected so no affordable housing loss occurs in Skid Row or Downtown Los Angeles. Create and maintain a public registry of units.

**Anti-Displacement Protections:** Tenants facing evictions have the right to a lawyer and just cause protections in their leases. End discrimination against housing vouchers. Unhoused Skid Row residents must be housed in the Skid Row neighborhood and not displaced.

**No Changes to Skid Row Boundaries:** The proposed affordability zone must extend to the traditional boundaries of Skid Row (Main to Alameda and Third to Seventh). Remove any existing possibilities for market rate housing to be built within these boundaries and prevent any zoning changes that may allow for market rate housing.

**Arts and Culture:** Skid Row has a high number of artists and culture bearers that live and work in the neighborhood. Yet it is an underserved neighborhood in a culturally overserved Council District, given the large cultural institutions in Downtown Los Angeles. The City and the Department of Cultural Affairs needs to acknowledge and rectify this by directing more financial resources and opportunities to support arts and culture in Skid Row, such as a property owners fee for the arts, contracts with local artists, Firehouse 23 renovation with extensive and accessible programming for adults and youth, dedicated cultural space in new construction and street vending support for local merchants. The community plan must support the creation and/or sustenance of community cultural centers as creative places to preserve and share local history and enhance neighborhood pride and social cohesion.

### **Health & wellbeing**

**Green Space and Common Space:** Audit City Parks and Recreation to eliminate overspending in predominantly white, affluent neighborhoods, and focus more physical and social resources in Skid Row parks. Provide more funding for hygiene supporting resources in Skid Row parks based on the 24/7 Refresh Spot model. Build longer crosswalk timers, speed bumps, crossing signals, bike lanes and improved signage on all Skid Row streets. Convert City land to community gardens.

**Sanitation:** Cancel Clean Harbors' contract and employ Skid Row residents for neighborhood street cleaning and 311 bulky item pickup. Employ residents to staff green toilets 24/7.

**Health and Wellness Protections:** Downtown LA is saturated with hundreds of alcohol uses and Skid Row, a Recovery Neighborhood, which prioritizes resources for recovery, has been threatened by alcohol-fueled redevelopment. No new alcohol permits shall be issued in Skid Row (including restaurants, bars, and convenience stores). Additionally, no new marijuana businesses shall be permitted (with a possible exception for community run Social Equity businesses-not to exceed 3). Access to affordable, healthy food options and nutritional support is a major priority, supporting the health of Skid Row residents and workers. Incentives must be provided to convert existing stores, promote new businesses, and support community gardens and Farmers Markets.

## Neighbor engagement & participation

**Skid Row Neighborhood Council/Representative Body for DTLA 2040:** A process must be developed, and resources dedicated to support a neighborhood council/representative body for the Skid Row community. This will give residents and workers a direct channel to express our voices on all City decisions related to Skid Row including implementation of the community plan. With Skid Row being a predominantly Black neighborhood, this representative body could address equity concerns, including systemic practices that have historically disenfranchised community members, as well as identify and promote best practices.

**Bridging the Digital Divide:** Skid Row residents and workers want to engage with the City and DCP on land use planning and other decisions affecting our neighborhood and our lives. To this end, neighborhood-wide internet and computer access must be provided for Skid Row neighbors to easily access online correspondence and meetings with the City and advocacy groups during the current pandemic.

**End the Criminalization of Homelessness:** Stop the over-policing and arrest of homeless people. Defund the police and redirect resources to Skid Row residents and workers to improve our neighborhood and our lives. Partner with people experiencing homelessness to create opportunities to address immediate needs and inform systems change. This includes employment opportunities for community members with lived expertise.

## Development opportunity enhancement & investment

**Inclusionary Zoning:** Developers must be required to set-aside no less than 25% of all Downtown Los Angeles residential units built for affordable housing at a deeply affordable level for residents currently living in poverty.

**Affordable Housing Financing:** The City must create new funding sources for affordable housing through developer fees, tax increment financing, and a vacancy tax. Activate developer fees from the existing TFAR program as well as a new 1% impact bond for rental subsidies. Assess the feasibility of tax increment financing mechanisms such as EIFD, CRIA, NIFTI and AHA, and establish a tax increment financing district in Skid Row and Downtown Los Angeles. Charge a 1% tax annually on any vacant building's value for every year it is vacant and route this funding to affordable housing in Skid Row.

