

**COUNCILMEMBER MITCH O'FARRELL  
STATE OF HOLLYWOOD SPEECH  
2018**

Thank you DD---

Thank you to the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, the Hollywood Museum, Variety - and all the sponsors who made today possible. Thank you to Gary Taglyan and his wonderful team here at the Taglyan complex for always making us feel welcome.

Lastly, thank you to everyone gathered here who carved out a little time to attend this luncheon!

As many of you may recall, during my past two speeches, I devoted a lot of time calling for the defeat of Measure "S."

Remember Measure S?

Hollywood -and the 13th District- were ground zero for this citywide initiative. The defeat of Measure S was so important for this city and to me that for a year and ½ I actively campaigned against it and at times, my own campaign for re-election took a back seat.

Well –

On March 7, 2017, Measure S went down in flames and I'm humbled by the opportunity to continue to represent Hollywood!

Measure S lost big and people in this room helped in its demise. Despite being outspent by millions, Measure S was defeated about 70 to 30 percent. In fact, the 13<sup>th</sup> Council District had the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest margin of defeat of all 15 council districts. We made the case and made it early, just how bad for Los Angeles Measure S would have been.

So what does this outcome mean?

It means we can continue growing our economy while providing great construction jobs and creating more places for people to live and work.

It also means a change in the status quo; that Angelenos need to see results providing affordable housing and housing our homeless across the city.

On that note, here's what we're doing to address homelessness.

In last year's budget I fought for additional HOPE Teams. HOPE stands for – homeless outreach and proactive engagement.

The teams were approved with additional dedicated police officers and sanitation workers and I am working to make sure they are deployed where they're needed most.

Also, last year my office partnered with social service organizations and the LAPD to start a pilot program along Santa Monica boulevard called the Midnight Stroll to provide services and a pathway to housing for transgender and homeless individuals. We are now funding an expansion of that program which will include emergency shelter beds and onsite services.

One important and tangible milestone was reached last month when we broke ground on the first measure HHH-funded, permanent supportive housing project in the City of Los Angeles and it's in the 13<sup>th</sup> District! Enough units are now under construction at PATH Metro Villas to eventually house nearly 200 formerly homeless individuals!

The focus for the Mayor and certainly myself, and other colleagues on the city council is now to make real progress on measures HHH and H: Streamlining the funding, design, permitting, and construction of permanent supportive housing. In order to accomplish that we'll need to simplify the process through City Planning and streamline the appeal process.

To that end, it's all hands on deck to prepare a new permanent homeless shelter in the 13<sup>th</sup> District. The plans and the funding are in the early stages, but the decision has been made. We expect a facility to open within a few years. Stay tuned for more details.

In my district we have other projects progressing that will house formerly homeless individuals and provide affordable housing for many others - including artists.

The Actors Fund, with Tom Safran and Associates, in partnership with the Youth Policy Institute, have been awarded the rights to develop over 100 affordable units with art and gallery space on the city-owned surface parking lot at Wilcox and Schrader. The Hollywood Arts Collective will be the first of its kind in Hollywood and for that matter, the city. This is smart growth and good public policy. The city retains its public parking spaces while housing struggling artists in affordable units who are trying to get on their feet, while supporting arts and culture in the entertainment capital of the world. This type of housing would have

been a Godsend to me when I was a struggling actor/dancer in Hollywood over 25 years ago.

A few other housing initiatives the city council approved in 2017: linkage fees and my “Value Capture” ordinance. The linkage fee ordinance will result in funding for the production of affordable housing while my Value Capture ordinance establishes clear affordable housing requirements for developers that seek density beyond current state and local regulations. This ordinance was crafted based on experiences negotiating affordable units during my first term in office.

As we work to build walkable, thriving neighborhoods, we know that a main component to making our communities vibrant are neighborhood serving businesses.

One of my main purposes in running for public office in 2013 was to enact policies or laws that would serve our small business community. Usually that means the mom and pop store on the corner or the shop down the street owned by a sole proprietor and employing local residents. In Los Angeles three quarters of all employees work at what is classified as a “small business.” Often times these are restaurants, dry cleaners, coffee houses, the neighborhood bar, food markets, gift and souvenir shops, handcrafted and locally sourced specialty shops – we need City Hall to serve these business owners, their purveyors, and their employees!

To that end, we took big steps in 2017. I introduced my “open for business initiatives” in 2016. They were based on years of hearing nightmare stories from local business owners on how they were treated with indifference or neglect at city hall, along with my experiences in helping guide some of them through the byzantine and confusing requirements imposed by the city, and in some cases, City Hall interfering with their ability to open or remain open.

My initiatives directed our Department of City Planning to change its approach in dealing with our business community. We have now achieved some long-term goals such as administrative approvals for restaurants and bars to have their permits renewed when they have proven to be good operators. This will save establishments in Hollywood and across the city in some cases, tens of thousands of dollars every five years to navigate needless public hearings, various fees, and deal with the uncertainty of staying open. City Hall will now play a supportive role for businesses that are a value to the neighborhood and operators with a good reputation. Folks, this is a real achievement!

There is now better coordination amongst the city departments concerning businesses that have applications pending to open, expand, or upgrade their locations. On an ongoing basis, we will evaluate and expand the “open for business” culture at city hall and the collaborative spirit we have established with

other entities such as county health, and state agencies and departments in order to give our small businesses and their employees the support they need and deserve.

I want to thank the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety for their hard work in support of these efforts.

I couldn't finish a 2017 Hollywood recap without mentioning our significant accomplishments toward more inviting, safer streets for pedestrians as well as fighting crime.

First of all, a big shout out to Captain Cory Palka and the women and men of LAPD Hollywood Division! We know the city continues to struggle with rising crime rates but on balance, Hollywood Division in recent years has worked hard to keep crime under control and it's working. Last year there were a total of 2 homicides in Hollywood, greatly reduced from previous years. Even one homicide is too many, but two as opposed to yearly multiple homicides in the past is a giant leap in the right direction.

As Captain Palka, and his command staff know, I have gone after some of the bad night-time operators in Hollywood that were harboring criminal activity. In the last two years, we have shut down three of those bad operators by revoking their operating permits and there may be a few more in the coming year. Reducing crime wherever we can will simply make Hollywood safer and reduce violent assaults and worse. I pledge to continue working hand in hand with the Hollywood LAPD and all other partners to make Hollywood safer.

Safe communities are livable communities.

And here are some of our other Hollywood highlights for 2017:

- Funded an arts program through the Hollywood Arts Council at Grant Elementary School and worked with the carpenters union and local volunteers to beautify the school grounds.
- Organized a meeting and neighborhood walk hosted by the Hollywood Entertainment District BID, and brought Deputy Chief Dennis Kato, which resulted in a new foot beat on the historic walk of fame. Thank you Chief Kato! We have a lot of work to do on the boulevard to enhance greater safety but we are on our way. Additional actions to make the Walk of Fame safer and cleaner are well in the works and you'll be seeing those results in the coming weeks.
- Funded an extension of the Hollywood pool season by an additional month during summer.

- Led in the designation of the former Hollywood Reporter building on Sunset as a historic cultural monument, the 11<sup>th</sup> such designation since taking office. In 2018 there will be more historic designations in the 13<sup>th</sup> district such as the Musicians Union Hall at Vine and Waring where we worked with Hollywood Heritage and the development team, and now construction of a new office building on their surface parking lot is underway. These historic resources are being re-imagined and re-purposed into the new Hollywood that is emerging before us.
- Worked with the Bureau of Street Lighting, Hollywood Chamber of Commerce and the Entertainment District BID to install permanent new decorative lights & lighting fixtures on 54 trees along Hollywood Boulevard.
- Installed a new pedestrian safety signal at the Hollywood and Lyman Place crosswalk.
- Installed new steel fencing and new gates along the perimeter of Barnsdall Art Park, increasing security at the park, especially at night.
- Allocated \$1.9 million in funds to begin the restoration of the Frank Lloyd Wright designed “residence A” at Barnsdall Park, which had been neglected and dilapidated for decades.
- Celebrated the installation of a 3,300 square foot mural, at Barton and Western and allocated funds to protect it from vandalism.
- Improved pedestrian safety at a main entrance of Children’s Hospital by modifying the traffic signal at Rodney drive and Sunset.
- Secured increased patrol and public safety officers for the Cahuenga Library and the Hollywood Goldwyn Library.
- Completed the long anticipated Vermont medians, landscaped beautifully and a big accomplishment for the east Hollywood business improvement district!

Those were only the highlights. We have done so much more in Hollywood’s residential neighborhoods such as stop signs, street lights, new parking restrictions, planted street trees, installed curb ramps, sponsored mobile health clinics, and helped guide the Youth Policy Institute’s early Head Start Center at Lexington and Vine, directly across the street, through their entitlement process and they opened last month serving local families who are working hard to get on their feet:

We celebrated films and television programs made in Hollywood, bringing media attention to the fact that Hollywood is the best place in the world for location filming and studio productions!

I am very excited about what is in store for 2018!

- At the north 101 exit at Hollywood Boulevard sits a blighted, neglected strip of land sadly serving as the first impression visitors have of Hollywood. That's about to change: my office identified funding and sponsored a contest to design and install a gateway project celebrating the significance and culture of Armenians in the Little Armenia community. It will be installed this year, and provide a welcoming artistic element for all who come to Hollywood.

Also coming:

- A new full traffic signal at Hollywood and McCadden Place to make the crossing safer for Musicians Institute students and all other pedestrians in the area. My office takes a proactive approach in bringing city resources to make good things happen in Hollywood and I want to again, highlight the great work of my staff on this newest public safety improvement.

- The safe routes to school project for Selma Elementary and Hollywood High will result in a new traffic signal at Highland and Hawthorn. The project will include curb ramps, bump-outs, and upgraded crosswalks.

- Our Hollywood and Western streetscape, Phase I will wrap up soon. It includes bump-outs, upgraded crosswalks, new sidewalks, curb ramps, and a new full traffic signal at Hollywood and Gramercy in this emerging and vibrant commercial and residential corridor.

- And, in this first quarter of 2018, the new scramble crosswalk at Hollywood and Vine will be installed! This will compliment the new bike hub we dedicated on that block in 2017, all of this located right above the Metro Red Line stop.

Hollywood continues to grow. These are projects that are currently underway, a few of them opening in 2018!

- Academy Square mixed-use campus at Vine and De Longpre.

- The Godfrey Hotel at Cahuenga just south of Sunset.

- The "Rise" is under construction on Cahuenga across from the LAPD Hollywood station. It will feature affordable housing and live-work units that my office negotiated.

- The Essex project at Sunset and Argyle, also including affordable housing negotiated by my office, and the preservation and restoration of the Earl Carroll Theatre.
- The Thompson Hotel is under construction on Wilcox between Sunset and Hollywood.
- The Dream Hotel, Phase II is also underway at Selma and Wilcox.
- Across the street from the “Eastown” project at Hollywood and Argyle, Eastown (I’ll call it) “south” is nearly complete. This mixed use project with ground floor retail will be open this year.
- Hudson Pacific’s “Epic” will be rising rapidly from the ground in 2018, another catalytic project solidifying the growing importance of the Sunset Boulevard corridor, joining Hudson Pacific’s “Icon,” Technicolor, Emerson College, Columbia Square, the future Palladium project and the Ivar Gardens Hotel, as world-class projects for a community deserving of this distinction.
- And lastly, the Hollywood Community Plan Update is slated for adoption later this year.

I’ve said this before; as we evolve into the future, we don’t need to sacrifice our past. Our history is what makes Hollywood so special. That’s why historic preservation is important to me. The tensions that arise from change and development pressures are inevitable and important. They help inform us of better ways to grow. In the nation’s second largest city, and being the second largest city’s most famous community, Hollywood will change. And I’ve said this before. I believe Hollywood’s built environment can change for the better. If everyone could see the snapshot in my mind of 1982, when I moved here full of hope for my own future, I encountered a Hollywood in steep decline and excluding most of Hollywood Boulevard, plenty of substandard, uninspired architecture and surface parking lots, mixed in with the historic gems. That experience continues to inform my perspective in working with all of you on how we will build the Hollywood of today and tomorrow.

In closing, author and urbanist Jane Jacobs, in her most famous book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* - said,

“Dull, inert cities, it is true, do contain the seeds of their own destruction and little else. But lively, diverse, intense cities contain the seeds of their own regeneration, with energy enough to carry over for problems and needs outside themselves.”

I believe this describes our beloved Hollywood.

We have something very valuable in addition;

The people with exceptional talent to encourage and guide this process along.

We have such a strong foundation here. A foundation of experienced people who care, who are optimistic, determined, that rely on each other, who collaborate to make good things happen, that support our institutions, our non profits, and our business community. I cannot underscore how important and special this is, right here in the most famous neighborhood in the world where to me it feels like a small, close knit community, a family.

Within us are the seeds of Hollywood's own regeneration. We are cultivating those seeds, nurturing their growth, and will forever be good stewards of the wonderful improvements we bring to our community.

Thank you!

=====