LABC INSTITUTE

News Release

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In New Poll, L.A. City Voters Send Clear Message to State and Local Officials and Candidates: Build More Housing Now!

Survey supports wide array of new housing, including mixed-income projects benefiting middle income Angelenos who are struggling to afford housing in the city

LOS ANGELES (April 23, 2026) – Deeply concerned about housing affordability and homelessness, Los Angeles voters strongly support policies to accelerate construction of all types of rental housing and favor by a two-to-one margin a bigger state government role in local housing decisions, according to a new survey commissioned by the Los Angeles Business Council Institute.

The poll revealed the widespread strain of housing costs for residents. Seven in 10 Angelenos – including more than half of all homeowners and 86% of renters – find it difficult to afford housing. Three-quarters of renters surveyed have considered leaving the city, compared to 63% of voters overall.

Angelenos are coalescing around a range of policy solutions aimed at increasing housing supply, reducing costs, and addressing homelessness at both the local and state levels. Public opinion strongly favors building a wide variety of housing throughout Los Angeles.

Among local solutions, voters favor – by a margin of 71% to 23% – expanding an L.A. law that fast-tracks low-income housing to include new apartments for middle-income residents in commercial and industrial areas that are near public transit. Nearly two-thirds of voters support automatic approval for new apartment projects that dedicate 20% of units for low-income residents.

Voters overwhelmingly support building rental housing for veterans, low-income families and seniors, public service workers like teachers and firefighters, and middle-class families with children.

For years, the LABC has called upon City leaders to expand the expediting of mixed-income projects to address the City's mounting housing affordability crisis. The survey makes clear that Angelenos across a wide income spectrum are demanding solutions, and they are providing clarity about the policy options they prefer.

Among the popular statewide proposals among L.A. voters: making underutilized state land available for new housing (79%), leveraging new technologies and construction methods to reduce development costs (79%), encouraging housing growth in suburban areas (75%), and expanding first-time homebuyer programs (75%). Similar majorities support expediting the review of housing lawsuits and creating a one-stop shop for state approvals for affordable housing developers.

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By a 20-point margin, voters oppose or are likely to oppose a statewide initiative that would raise the approval threshold from 50% to two-thirds for local special taxes as well as overturn voter-approved local taxes like Measure ULA – L.A.'s so-called "mansion tax" that funds homelessness prevention and affordable housing.

Housing Likely a Defining Election Issue

The survey underscores how critical, perhaps decisive, the issue of housing affordability will be in upcoming local and state elections. The findings will frame discussions at the 24th Annual Los Angeles Business Council (LABC) Housing, Transportation, and Jobs Summit on Friday, April 24, including a panel with leading gubernatorial candidates Steve Hilton, Matt Mahan, Tom Steyer, and Antonio Villaraigosa.

The poll found that nearly nine in ten L.A. voters across the demographic and political spectrum view housing affordability and cost of living as a "very serious or serious problem," eclipsed only by the issue of homelessness among a list of a dozen issues facing Los Angeles voters.

"Despite billions of dollars in investment and new policies, housing concerns have only become more acute for Angelenos throughout the city, regardless of their age, income, or race," said LABC President Mary Leslie. "The voters are demanding more be done to create a more livable city, and that means more housing for everyone from the unhoused to middle-class families throughout Los Angeles."

"As this poll clearly indicates, Angelenos are sending a clear and urgent message: the status quo is not working. We need to move faster, embed the latest technology, think bigger and build more low and moderate-income housing to preserve the promise and affordability of Los Angeles," said Richard Ziman, Current and Founding Vice Chair of the LABC.

"New to this poll's findings is a rising concern of voters about taxes, jobs and economic development" said David Nahai, LABC Chair. "This is something that the LABC and our colleagues in the public and private sectors will be addressing."

"It's rare to see Angelenos this aligned on the urgency of the housing crisis and the need to expand supply across income levels," said John Fairbank of L.A.-based FM3 Research, which conducted the public opinion survey. "Very few voters believe the city is headed in the right direction, underscoring a deep frustration with the pace of progress."

Tensions and Skepticism Persist Among Voters

The poll also reveals clear tensions when it comes to where that housing is built. Only 40% of voters favor building new apartments in neighborhoods that currently have only single-family homes, and nearly half of homeowners believe that affordable housing for low- and moderate-income renters will lower home values.

Renters are also skeptical that housing production will drive rents down. According to the poll, less than three-in-ten renters think more affordable housing will reduce their rent. Yet they still favor, by nearly a two-to-one margin, increasing the number of new housing units to address the lack of accessible and affordable housing in Los Angeles.

The findings highlight the need to overcome deep voter skepticism about government's ability to deliver meaningful progress on housing. Only 23% have some or a great deal of confidence in L.A. City government, 25% in the County, and 30% in Sacramento.

Despite new policies and programs to spur housing development, voters are not seeing results. Many approved market-rate and affordable housing projects in L.A. have yet to break ground, the pace of new housing construction significantly lags the City's annual housing goals, rents continue to rise, and homelessness remains stubbornly high despite many intensive City-led efforts.

More broadly, just one in six L.A. voters believe Los Angeles is headed in the right direction, and only one-quarter believe the state is on the right track, according to the survey. Some 40% say the affordability gap is so serious that the state government should assume a bigger role and require cities to build more housing, twice the number of voters who favor keeping local control of housing decisions.

Voters are also skeptical that more housing will significantly reduce homelessness. And by a 19-point margin, L.A. voters say City Hall should prioritize temporary shelters to serve more homeless people in the short term over building permanent housing with support services.

FM3 Research's survey of 751 registered L.A. voters was conducted in mid-April and has a margin of error of ±3.7 percentage points. To read the full survey, visit labcinstitute.org.

To learn more about the LABC Housing, Transportation and Jobs Summit, visit here.

A livestream of the Summit will be available Friday, April 24, starting at 7:45 a.m. here.

About the Los Angeles Business Council Institute

The LABC Institute is a forward-thinking research and education organization dedicated to strengthening the sustainable economy of California. Founded in 2010, the Institute provides a bridge between the business, government, environmental, labor and nonprofit communities of Southern California to develop policies and programs that promote investment, jobs and business development. The Institute is the research and education arm of the Los Angeles Business Council, one of the most respected business advocacy organizations in the region. Founded in 1936, the LABC is known as an innovator and catalyst for policy development on a wide range of issues, including education, housing, green building, energy efficiency, transportation and solar development. For more information, please visit labusinesscouncil.org.

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