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## **Downtown Women's Center Expands Beyond Skid Row to Address Women's Homelessness**

*Reveals New Vision, Mission Statement, and Values*

LOS ANGELES – The Downtown Women's Center (DWC) today announced the adoption of a strategic plan by their Board of Directors that will guide the organization's work to end women's homelessness in Los Angeles from 2018 to 2020. During that time, DWC boldly aims to increase the number of women it supports in housing by 200% and to advance systems change to break the cycle of homelessness for women.

DWC has moved beyond their historic base of serving chronically homeless women in Skid Row, now providing services to women experiencing homelessness across Los Angeles County, where homelessness continues to rise. The population of individuals experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County has grown to 57,794, a 23% increase from 2016, according to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's (LAHSA) 2017 Homeless Count. Of those, 17,882 are women, an increase of 16% since 2016.

Historically, housing and services for those experiencing homelessness were mainly designed to meet the needs of the single, adult men. For the close to 18,000 women experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County on any given night, accessing services is challenging due to a lack of safe spaces for women and targeted gender-specific services.

DWC holds a unique position in the field, providing a gendered view of homelessness, housing, and related issues. As part of their 2018-2020 Strategic Plan, a new vision, mission statement, and set of organizational values were approved by DWC's Board of Directors.

Vision: We envision a Los Angeles with every woman housed and on a path to personal stability.

Mission: To end women's homelessness in greater Los Angeles through housing, wellness, and advocacy.

Values: Community, woman-centered, equity, sustainability, and respect.

"In the 40 years since DWC's founding, our focus on providing permanent housing and a range of supportive, trauma-informed services for women experiencing homelessness is what has made us stand out as an organization," said Anne Miskey, DWC's Chief Executive Officer. "In recent years, we've seen the homelessness crisis worsen in Los Angeles while

also witnessing positive trends in voter support and public will to address the issue. Our expansion beyond Skid Row reflects our same commitment to meeting women's needs and ending women's homelessness in greater Los Angeles."

"Homelessness is the crisis of our lifetime, and women are finding themselves on the streets of Los Angeles at an alarming rate. Skid Row was once the epicenter, but today homelessness is everywhere you look," added Heather Rim, DWC's Board President. "The Downtown Women's Center is confronting this epidemic head-on by expanding our commitment to serving women throughout Los Angeles."

The Downtown Women's Center will host a community celebration of their new vision, mission, and values at a happy hour event at Angel City Brewery (216 Alameda St., LA, 90012) on Wednesday, February 7, 2018, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. All are invited to attend.

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#### **About Downtown Women's Center**

The Downtown Women's Center (DWC) is the only organization in Los Angeles focused exclusively on serving and empowering women experiencing homelessness and formerly homeless women. DWC envisions a Los Angeles with every woman housed and on a path to personal stability. Its mission is to end homelessness for women in greater Los Angeles through housing, wellness, and advocacy. Founded in 1978, DWC was the first permanent supportive housing provider for women in the U.S. Learn more at [www.DowntownWomensCenter.org](http://www.DowntownWomensCenter.org).