

Housing Commission Applicant

Gina DeBaca

Application Date: 07/20/21

Reside in Santa Monica: yes

If yes, number of years: 50

Hold an elected position: no

If yes, please specify:

Applying for the seat reserved for a Housing Authority Section 8 Program participant: no

Applying for the seat reserved for a Housing Authority Section 8 Program participant who is over the age of 62: no

INTERESTS AND EXPERIENCE

Current or prior service on city boards/commissions:

Community activities:

2004-Present Pico Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

2005- Chair of Violence prevention

2009- 2014 Tongva Springs Board of Directors {501c3}

2012- 2015 Community Liaison Edison PTA Board

Qualifications, experience, education, and technical or professional requirements:

I have been an active community Member since my teenage years. I attended Santa Monica college as an Anthropology Major.

Over the years I have been an active community member. My involvement has consisted of participation on the Pico Neighborhood Association Board of Directors, A Violence Prevention Committee (which I Chaired), serving as the Community Liaison for the Edison PTA Board of Directors, and participating on the Board of Directors of Tongva Springs, which is a 501 (c) (3) organization whose goal is to keep the springs on the native land safe and intact for future generations.

I have lived in Santa Monica for fifty years now. The neighborhoods where I have resided include Pico, Sunset Park and Ocean Park. For about twenty years I was a Section 8 voucher holder. I lost my voucher during the time the Pico neighborhood was undergoing rapid gentrification. It is my belief that my Ethnicity was the reason I lost my housing there. Since then I have experienced housing insecurity and homelessness. My lived experience also includes residing in the City's affordable housing i.e. CCSM apartments.

Areas of demonstrated expertise:

I have lived in Santa Monica since I was a child. My Family were The Original Rancho Families of Santa Monica.

I have always been a Renter. I grew up in The Sunset park Neighborhood. I have also lived in the Oceanpark neighborhood. 25 years of My Life I resided in The Pico Neighborhood.

While on the PNA Board of Directors I participated in assisting multiple individual residents and families in remaining housed when they were experiencing housing insecurity. One example is the apartment building on Virginia at 21st Street where the owner was harassing the tenants. We were able to step in, include the City Attorney's assistance, and save a lot of residents from being thrown out on the street. Another example is the multi unit complex at Virginia and 22nd Street where the PNA Board of Directors was able to get the City involved after the owner passed away and his children raised the rents suddenly by a large amount. We were able to step in and assist those tenants so they did not lose their housing. Yet another example is assisting a tenant on 16th Street who was harassed by the landlord. We were able to find an attorney to assist the tenant and make sure the tenant remained housed. I was personally involved in those housing-related cases, and others, while on the PNA Board of Directors.

Goals:

My main goal would be to assure preventative services and resources are available to the residents in order to keep them from becoming homeless. The city is currently lacking such much needed resources other than the small POD program for seniors. My personal experience and experience assisting others experiencing housing insecurity tells me that more services and resources are needed.

My other goal would be to make sure that "affordable" in Santa Monica means really, actually affordable. People should be able to remain housed without being housing burdened, i.e. having to work several jobs just to be able to pay rent.

Vision:

I believe the Housing Commission should be focused on real life situations related to affordable housing and the subsidized housing programs in the City. It should be better at listening to the community and ready to address the issues that the residents bring before it. I believe that increasing the number of commissioners with lived experience and more diverse backgrounds would be a good start.

Personal Qualities:

My Life long history of Team work speaks for itself.

I have sat on several Boards throughout My Lifetime and have been involved in countless Community Actions.

Sitting on Boards and working with coalitions you are a Team player. This is how you work effectively in a group.

Listen, educate yourself and your fellow board members.

Will you be able to commit the necessary time to perform your duties if appointed to the board?

yes

How did you learn about the vacancy in this board or commission? (select all that apply)

On the City's website (smgov.net or santamonica.gov)

BUSINESS INFORMATION

Occupation: Teacher

Business name: Santa Monica Ballet Folklorico

Business address: 2720 Nielson Way #5273

Santa Monica, Ca 90405

Business phone: 3102662810