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Board Considers Special March Election

Acting on a [motion](#) by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved looking into hosting a countywide consolidated Special Election on March 7. The ballot could include, among other things, a ¼-cent sales tax that, if approved by the Board and voters, would raise \$355 million annually to address the crisis of homelessness.

At present, 36 jurisdictions – cities and districts, including the City of Los Angeles – are scheduled to hold municipal elections concurrently on March 7. Consolidating them into a single Special Election conducted by the County of Los Angeles would save millions of dollars, while also reducing voter fatigue and confusion, and encouraging voter participation.

LA City and County have been working together to raise the money needed to make a significant dent in the crisis of homelessness. This November, the City will ask voters to approve Proposition HHH, a \$1.2-billion bond that could potentially finance the construction of as many as 10,000 permanent supportive housing units for the chronically homeless over the next decade. If the County places a ¼-cent sales tax on the ballot in March, it could generate a significant percentage of the funding needed to cover supportive services, rapid rehousing, street outreach teams, rental subsidies, and other programs desperately needed by its homeless population, numbering almost 47,000.

Jacqueline Waggoner, vice president of Enterprise Community Partners, a nonprofit that helps create affordable housing, expressed support for the motion. “A consolidated election would generate greater awareness and higher participation by the voters for passage of a potential ballot measure for much-needed funding to address homelessness, complementing the City of Los Angeles’ November 2016 Housing Bond,” Waggoner said. “A comprehensive regional funding strategy is needed to ensure the best opportunity at success.”