

FACT SHEET: Chronic Homelessness in the City of Los Angeles

October 2016



Chronic Homelessness and Permanent Supportive Housing

There are over **9,000 people experiencing chronic homelessness** in the City of Los Angeles and more than **90% of these people find themselves unsheltered**, living on the streets or other places not meant for human habitation. While various types of disabilities may contribute to a person becoming chronically homeless, there's only one contributing factor common amongst all chronically homeless people: their lack of access to affordable housing.

Permanent Supportive Housing Offers a Solution

- **What is PSH?** Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is subsidized housing paired with supportive services that assists chronically homeless individuals and families with achieving and maintaining housing stability. In PSH, supportive services are tailored to the needs of each individual resident and may include case management, peer support, mental health, health care, substance abuse, and employment training services.
- **PSH is effective.** Last year within the LA Continuum of Care, **96%** of formerly homeless people living in Permanent Supportive Housing **remained housed**.ⁱ

Who Is Considered Chronically Homeless?

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines someone as “chronically homeless” if they have a **disability AND** have lived in a place not meant for human habitation or a shelter for the last 12 months continuously **OR** on at least 4 occasions in the last 3 years where those occasions cumulatively total 12 months.

[“Defining Chronically Homeless Final Rule.”](#)
[U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, December 2015.](#)

LAHSA researchers project that **the City of Los Angeles needs approximately 10,000 PSH units to effectively address the population of chronically homeless individuals and families.**ⁱⁱ Without these PSH resources, people who are chronically homeless will continue to live on our streets where they remain vulnerable to crime, disease, and degradation.



The Connection between Chronic Homelessness and a Shortage of Affordable Housing

Vacancy rates for the LA metro area fell to 3% in the first quarter of 2016 from 5.3% in the first quarter of 2011.ⁱⁱⁱ This strong demand for housing stretches further an already overextended stock of affordable housing. **Over 61% of City renters experience rent burden**, paying more than 30% of their income on

rent.^{iv} This tightening market affects homelessness in two ways. First, it puts people who are currently housed at greater risk of becoming homeless. Second, it makes it more difficult for people currently experiencing homelessness to compete for rental vacancies and to exit their state of homelessness.

Contributing to this crisis is the significant reduction in funding for affordable housing in the City of Los Angeles. After the dissolution of state redevelopment agencies, the City's affordable housing funding shrank from \$100 million in 2010 to \$26 million in 2014. In fact, Los Angeles is the only large city in California without a permanent source of local funding dedicated to affordable housing.^v Without a consistent source of capital funding, the City has been unable to keep up with the demand for affordable housing in general, and PSH built for chronically homeless persons specifically.

The 2016 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count found **28,464** homeless persons in the City of Los Angeles, an **increase of almost 11%** over 2015.

Proposition HHH: Homelessness Reduction and Prevention, Housing, and Facilities Bond

Under Proposition HHH that is before voters in the City of Los Angeles on the November 8 ballot, the City proposes to issue up to \$1.2 billion in general obligation bonds to buy, build, or remodel facilities to provide:

- Supportive housing for homeless individuals and families where services such as health care, mental health and substance abuse treatment, education, and job training may be provided;
- Temporary shelters and facilities, such as storage and showers;
- Affordable housing (up to 20% of bond funds), including veterans housing for individuals and families with low incomes; and
- Related infrastructure.

The bond would be paid from an increase in property taxes. Citizens Oversight and Administrative Oversight Committees would monitor bond expenditures and a financial audit would be conducted annually.^{vi}

ⁱ HUD Systems Performance Measure for Los Angeles Continuum of Care (2016)

ⁱⁱ City of Los Angeles, Comprehensive Homeless Strategy (2016), pg 125.

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/data/rates.html>

^{iv} U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2014)

^v http://hcidla.lacity.org/system/files/documents/la_linkage_fee_final_report_9-21-16.pdf?download=1

^{vi} http://clerk.cityofla.acsitefactory.com/sites/g/files/wph606/f/2016%20November%20County%20WEB_English.pdf