Homelessness in Los Angeles: A Comprehensive Study

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Research Goal:
Evaluating the current homelessness crisis in Los Angeles County and City and looking towards the future.
The Current Crisis

Compared to other cities, L.A. is near the bottom in sheltering homelessness

- Homeless services area

100% of homeless people sheltered

80

60

40

20

0

San Francisco

Seattle

San Antonio

San Diego

Los Angeles

San Luis Obispo

New York City

Salt Lake City

Stockton

U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development 2016 Housing Inventory County and 2016 Point in Time Count

Increase in unsheltered homeless

Total homeless: 33,243

Unsheltered homeless: 19,193

Sheltered homeless: 14,050

Source: U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

Holland, Gale. “L.A.'s Homelessness Surged 75% in Six Years. Here's Why the Crisis Has Been Decades in the Making.” Los Angeles Times
The Effectiveness of Measure H

- $355 Million per year to provide services to the new housing units built through Prop HHH
- Of the 51 HI strategies, 45 have been fully or partially implemented by January of 2018
- These services address each of the key priorities of the Comprehensive Homeless Strategy
- The program has been successful so far

Source: Homeless Strategy Committee Report
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Draft Permanent Supportive Housing Ordinance

“Supportive Housing with no limit on length of stay that is occupied by persons with low incomes who have one or more disabilities”

The Target Population: “Have one or more disabilities, including mental illness, HIV or AIDS, substance abuse, or other chronic health condition, and are homeless

In the 2017-18 fiscal year, nine projects were funded to build 615 units, of which 416 are PSH.

Source: HCIDLA
Limitations in how services are delivered
Limitations in how services are delivered

- PSH’s in Los Angeles offer a robust array of services to their tenants, as is required by the Permanent Supportive Housing Ordinance.
- However, PSH’s come in different configurations: some are single sited, others scatter sited, and some are mixed.
- The way these services are implemented can affect retention, so it is vital to evaluate how services are being offered.
- Single sited facilities tend to offer more services than scatter sited ones.
- Services in scatter sited facilities tend to be patchworked together.

Source: Henwood et. al., Availability of comprehensive services in permanent supportive housing in Los Angeles,
Programs and Services in Shelters

1. Union Rescue Mission - Not funded by LAHSA - Accessible

Infrastructure: The floors in the building are split up by children, single women, families, and single men. The residents have key cards that only allow them to access the floor they are assigned.

Environment: HOPE Gardens - URM’s transitional home in Sylmar, California, has an eighty percent success rate according to URM’s CEO Andy Bales.

2. Midnight Mission - Funded by LAHSA

LAHSA makes sure requirements in programs are not restricting.

3. LA Mission - Not Funded by LAHSA

Very restrictive requirements (ex: must attend approved church every Sunday)

Overarching Problem - Housing

- finding housing
- gang members are ruling these housing complexes
City and Community Relations

Bridging the gap between the city and the Skid Row community:

Los Angeles Community Action Network (LACAN) - a community organization that addresses problems of exclusion of low-income residents in public decision making, lack of investment and resources in homeless communities, and helps create opportunities for people who receive a low income.

Skid Row Neighborhood Council - excellent place for the city, county, and community to discuss various issues that plight the Los Angeles Homeless community

Mass Incarceration and Police Relations

- Not only does incarceration not prepare inmates for reentry, merely criminalizing a person leads to a lack of trust of authority and creates trauma. By creating a lack of trust makes it harder for those experiencing homelessness to be vulnerable and enter a program. By contributing to these individuals, trauma makes their rehabilitation process more difficult. It is essential that the city holds law enforcement accountable and consult the community on their initiatives so that LAPD is not taking actions that are counterproductive to the services and programming that shelters are offering.
Coordinated Entry Services (CES) Overview

- **Service Programs:** Youth, Family, Single Persons
- **Coordinated Entry System:** is made up of 8 Service Planning Areas made up of city, county, non-profit, and private agencies coordinating to create a “real-time list” of people dealing with homelessness
- **Purpose:** Match Los Angelinos experiencing homelessness to services and resources

**Timeline**

- **2010** Los Angeles began to develop the CES System
- **2011** pilot projects in Skid Row (5,000 chronically homeless in area)
- **Present** Program Expanded to 7 additional Service Planning Areas in Los Angeles County
Eight Service Planning Areas and Community Partners

SPA 1 - Antelope Valley
Adults, Families & Youth - Valley Oasis

SPA 2 - San Fernando Valley
Adults & Families - LA Family Housing
Youth - Village Family Services

SPA 3 - San Gabriel Valley
Adults & Families - Union Station Homeless Services
Youth - Hathaway Sycamore

SPA 4 - Central Los Angeles
Adults - The People Concern
Families - PATH
Youth - Children's Hospital

SPA 5 - West Los Angeles
Adults & Families - St. Joseph Center
Youth - Safe Place for Youth

SPA 6 - South Los Angeles
Adults - SSG HOPICS
Families - Weingart Center Association
Youth - CRCD

SPA 7 - East Los Angeles
Adults - PATH
Families - The Whole Child
Youth - Jovenes

SPA 8 - South Bay / Harbor
Adults, Families & Youth - Harbor Interfaith
CES Programming and Services

- **Data Collection:** Track progress
- **Systems:** Housing Navigator, Case Conferencing, Referral
- **Investment:** Coordinate between service providers, city, and county agencies

**Goal(s)**

- Fill in gaps between databases in order to increase communication between Service Providers in Los Angeles (Ex. Unduplicate Individuals, Occupancy Rate)
- Efficiently identify and match housing and service needs for homeless individuals, youth, and families.
- Regional Coordination
- Engage with community members including homeless to identify most pressing issues
CES Effectiveness, Program Development, and Best Practices

- **Effectiveness:** 35,000 individuals housed with CES System in Los Angeles County
- **Program Development:** Expansion to 8 Service Provider Areas, Triage Test (Know, Assist, Refer)
- **New Programs and the Future of CES:**
  - New funding programs from Measure HHH and Measure H (ex. Funders Collaborative)
  - Scalability through identifying effective practices
Navigation Center: Hummingbird Place

- Intersectional addressing of homelessness, mental health issues and substance use/addiction
- Multiple sources of funding -- Interfaith Council (private); San Francisco Board of Supervisors & City Departments (public/governmental); Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (public/governmental)
- Route to permanent housing
- Allows families, pets, etc. to stay together during housing relocation
Project Homeless Connect

- Introduced by former S.F. Mayor Newsom
- Intersectional resources from private companies
  - Governmental-private sector collaboration
Policies that Antagonize Homeless Individuals

- Focus on visibility of city’s homeless population over the quality of life for this population
- Policies against sleeping outside/in cars; citations; regulating encampments
Best Practices: New York City

- Most comparable to L.A.
- IDNYC Program
- RobinHood Foundation
Best Practices: Seattle

- Shift funding to performance and results
- Enhanced shelter models to replace basic models
- City/County funded encampments
A World of Innovation

Finland and Housing First

● A Case for Cooperation
● A Sustainable Payment Plan
● A Focus on the Permanent
● A Movement Towards Integration
Re-Imagining Los Angeles - The 2028 L.A. Olympics

1988 Seoul: Forcible eviction of 725,000 people
2008 Beijing: 1.25 million displaced
2011: Human Rights Watch documented forced evictions and labor abuses

Even in cities with no forced evictions, skyrocketing rental costs displaced disadvantaged residents...

So, what should we do?

- Long term solutions
- Project Homeless Connect
- CareVan
Policy Recommendations

1. Eliminate the homeless population by the 2028 Olympics
   a. And develop sustainable ways to help before and after the Olympics

2. Allocation of more funding to permanent housing solutions

3. Identify best practices utilized in different Service Provider Areas and replicate throughout the county
   a. Program Scalability

4. Devise effective communication networks and strategies between local government
   a. County
   b. City
   c. Skid Row Neighborhood Council
   d. NGO Service Providers

5. Municipal ID Program to ensure access to services and provide a more accurate count

6. Transition from basic shelters to the enhanced model

7. Create City-funded encampments during transition to Housing First Model