

**This Report Card was compiled by: Jennifer Wolch, USC, Daniel Warshawsky, USC, Gary Blasi, UCLA, Michael Dear, USC, Daniel Flaming, Economic Roundtable, and Paul Tepper, USC.**

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**Homelessness Report Card Evaluators**

James Allen, California State University, Northridge  
Gary Blasi, UCLA  
Michael Cousineau, USC  
Dana Cuff, UCLA  
Michael Dear, USC  
William Deverell, USC  
Mark Drayse, California State University, Fullerton  
Gary Dymski, UC Riverside  
Daniel Flaming, Economic Roundtable  
Marilyn Flynn, USC  
Regina Freer, Occidental College  
Stuart Gabriel, UCLA  
Lillian Gelberg, UCLA  
David Halle, UCLA  
Joel Handler, UCLA  
Robert Harris, USC  
Zeke Hasenfeld, UCLA  
David James, USC  
Jacquelyn McCroskey, USC  
Donald Miller, USC  
Ali Modarres, California State University, Los Angeles  
Dowell Myers, USC  
Paul Ong, UCLA  
Octavio Pescador, UCLA  
Jaime Regalado, California State University, Los Angeles  
Leland Saito, USC  
Leonard Schneiderman, UCLA  
Allen Scott, UCLA  
David Sloane, USC  
Edward Soja, UCLA  
Madeleine Stoner, USC  
Lois Takahashi, UCLA  
William Tierney, USC  
Paul Tepper, USC  
Abel Valenzuela, UCLA  
Daniel Warshawsky, USC  
Susanne Wenzel, Ph.D.  
Jennifer Wolch, USC

*Note: Affiliations are provided for identification only.*



## Executive Summary

This Report Card by academics from USC, UCLA, UC Irvine, UC Riverside, UC San Diego, Loyola Marymount University, and Occidental College with support from the Economic Roundtable, grades the work and efforts of Los Angeles as it seeks to reduce and eliminate homelessness. The grades for nine Action Areas are meant to give the public, nonprofit and private sectors clear feedback on how well they are doing as well as provide the general public with a scorecard measuring our community's progress with regard to homelessness.

The number of homeless people in Los Angeles is higher than in any other US urban area.

In 2007, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) counted 73,702 homeless persons in Los Angeles County (including the 68,608 persons in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care and 5,094 persons in the cities of Pasadena, Glendale, and Long Beach). On an annual basis, this means that approximately 141,737 residents of the Los Angeles County Continuum of Care area are homeless at some point over the course of the year.

While there are signs that homelessness is declining, the total number of homeless men, women, and children remains unacceptably high. Homelessness cuts off life chances, especially for children, while increasing sickness and death; each day, a homeless person dies on the streets of Los Angeles County.<sup>1</sup>

In January 2007, the Inter-University Consortium Against Homelessness issued a report on a reality-based approach to ending homelessness in Los Angeles.<sup>2</sup> Since then, we have monitored local efforts to address homelessness, and assessed their impacts. This Report Card on Homelessness in Los Angeles is the first in an annual series designed to measure progress and efforts toward ending homelessness.

It is important to note that the report card, while mentioning the efforts of specific jurisdictions, is not a judgment about such jurisdictions but rather is about our collective progress and efforts *as a community*. We will only be able to move forward if we track indicators that reflect how well our community is doing in light of how far we still must go.

Moreover, we recognize that much of the responsibility for homelessness lies beyond our immediate region, at the state and federal levels where a significant share of the resources needed to end homelessness must originate. However, other cities have made strides because of leadership, proactive planning, and forward-looking programs and policies. Thus an important share of the burden of resolving the homelessness crisis surely remains local.

### **Our overall assessment across a variety of action areas related to homelessness is a D+.**

The detailed evaluations are summarized in Table 1 below, and suggest that we have much work before us—as a region and its communities, as government agencies and nonprofit organizations, and as friends and neighbors who care about ending homelessness.

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<sup>1</sup> The Los Angeles County Coroner's office reported 2,815 homeless deaths from January 1, 2000 to May 28, 2007, or one per day over this 7.5 year period. Whitney Hawke, Max Davis and Bob Erlenbusch, with Michael Stoops. *Dying Without Dignity: Homeless Deaths in Los Angeles County, 2000-2007*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness/National Coalition for the Homeless.

<sup>2</sup> Inter-University Consortium Against Homelessness. 2007. *A Reality-Based Approach to Ending Homelessness in Los Angeles*. Los Angeles, CA: Inter-University Consortium Against Homelessness; and Jennifer Wolch, Michael Dear, Gary Blasi, Dan Flaming, Paul Tepper, and Paul Koegel with Daniel Warshawsky. 2007. *Ending Homelessness in Los Angeles*. Los Angeles, CA: Inter-University Consortium Against Homelessness.

**Table 1: 2008 Report Card Summary**

Action Area	Grade	Trend	Effort to Improve
1. Affordable Housing	F	Neutral	Minor
2. Permanent Supportive Housing	D	Positive	Minor
3. Emergency / Transitional Housing	C-	Neutral	Minor
4. Government Health & Welfare Programs	C-	Neutral	Moderate
5. Emergency Food Provisions	C-	Negative	Minor
6. Workforce Opportunities	D-	Neutral	Minor
7. Homeless Civil Liberties	F	Neutral	None
8. Regional Fair Share	F	Positive	Minor
9. Leadership & Collaboration	B-	Positive	Moderate

**Explanation**

**Grades**

- A: Excellent – Highly effective action, problem eliminated.
- B: Good – Effective action, problem lingers.
- C: Fair – Partly effective action, major problems persist.
- D: Poor – Ineffective action, only superficial impact on problem/issue.
- F: Fail – Totally ineffective action, or no action; failure to address problem or its causes.

**Trends**

- Positive: Improving
- Neutral: Unchanging
- Negative: Worsening

**Effort**

- Strong: Significant, across-the-board effort
- Moderate: Some or uneven effort
- Minor: Little effort
- None: No effort
- Negative: Counterproductive effort

## Background

The number of homeless people in Los Angeles is higher than in any other U.S. urban area. While there are good signs that homelessness is declining, the total number of homeless men, women, and children remains unacceptably high.

In 2007, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) counted 73,702 homeless persons in Los Angeles County (including the 68,608 persons in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (CoC) and 5,094 persons in the cities of Pasadena, Glendale, and Long Beach). On an annual basis, this means that approximately 141,737 residents of the Los Angeles County Continuum of Care area are homeless at some point over the course of the year. Over 80% were living in Los Angeles County when they became homeless.

Of the 68,608 homeless persons counted in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care, more than half were African American, 19% White, almost a quarter Latino, 2% were American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 1% was Asian or Pacific Islander. Most were middle aged (58% between 41 and 60 years old), and 59% were adult men. Almost a quarter of all the homeless people counted were living in families. Almost half are chronically homeless, almost half of whom are African American. About 9% have been in the foster care system and 12% have been in the military at some point in their lives. Almost three-quarters reported having a disabling condition.<sup>3</sup> Tragically, 10,116 of the 68,608 persons in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care were children and youth.

Although differences in survey methodology between LAHSA's 2005 and 2007 counts may make comparisons more indicative than exact, it appears that the number of homeless people in LA County declined over this two year period by 17% (88,345 in 2005 to 73,702 in 2007).<sup>4</sup> Most of this reduction was among Whites and Latinos; there was almost no decline among African Americans and little change in the small percentages of either Native Americans or Asian Pacific Islanders. Approximately, 5,131 of this total live in Skid Row, the greatest concentration of homeless persons in Los Angeles County – a number that grew 29% between 2005 and 2007.

Perhaps most striking, 83% of homeless people (57,166) in LA County are unsheltered – living on the streets, alleys, and overpasses, or in cars, doorways or encampments – rather than in emergency or transitional housing. This is far higher than other major cities; for example, Philadelphia and New York shelter more than 90% of their homeless populations, and San Francisco shelters almost 60%.<sup>5</sup>

## Grading System

We have identified and presented salient data on nine (9) Action Areas, each of which influence the production of homelessness and the availability of pathways off the streets:

1. Affordable housing;
2. Permanent supportive housing;
3. Emergency and transitional housing;
4. Governmental health and welfare programs;
5. Emergency food provisions;
6. Workforce opportunities;
7. Homeless civil liberties;
8. Regional fair share efforts; and
9. Leadership and collaboration.

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<sup>3</sup> Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). 2007. *2007 Homeless Count Report*. Los Angeles, CA: LAHSA.

<sup>4</sup> Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). 2007. *2007 Homeless Count Report*. Los Angeles, CA: LAHSA. Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). 2005. *2005 Homeless Count Report*. Los Angeles, CA: LAHSA.

<sup>5</sup> Blasi, G. 2007. *Policing Our Way Out of Homelessness: The First Year of the Safer Cities Initiative on Skid Row*. Los Angeles, CA: Inter-University Consortium Against Homelessness.

Our grading system seeks to capture the current situation (Grade), direction of change (Trend), and degree of effort the Los Angeles community has collectively made to address homelessness (Effort to Improve):

### **Grades**

- A: Excellent – Highly effective action, problem eliminated
- B: Good – Effective action, problem lingers
- C: Fair – Partly effective action, major problems persist
- D: Poor – Ineffective action, only superficial impact on problem/issue.
- F: Fail – Totally ineffective action, or no action; failure to address problem or its causes

### **Trend**

- Positive: Improving
- Neutral: Unchanging
- Negative: Worsening

### **Effort**

- Major: Significant, across-the-board effort
- Moderate: Some or uneven effort
- Minor: Minimal effort
- None: No effort
- Negative: Counterproductive effort

It is important to note that we have aimed to evaluate how we as a community are doing, rather than to evaluate separately the contributions of particular political jurisdictions, agencies, or elements of our community.

Preliminary and final drafts of the Report Card were shared with officials in the City and County of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, and the United Way. We received many additional pieces of information, corrections, suggestions and comments, most of which are reflected in the final version of the Report Card. We recognize that many new efforts are underway across the region that cannot be expected to have come to fruition yet. Such projects and programs are not reflected here, but hopefully will influence outcomes in future years.

Thirty-eight members of the Inter-University Consortium Against Homelessness, all experts on poverty, affordable housing, and homelessness, received the final Report Card and scored each Action Area. Differences in scoring were assessed by an executive committee, to produce the finalized scores reported here. It should be noted that these are our own collective judgments; others can and will make their own independent assessments.

Progress and efforts here in Los Angeles are necessarily judged against the backdrop of what other major cities in the country have attempted and have been able to achieve. While no large urban region has eliminated homelessness, there is a wide variety of experience across the country and differential levels of endeavor and success. We are thus judging ourselves against both those urban areas that have made minimal efforts and progress, as well as those that have achieved the largest inroads into ending the tragedy of homelessness over the past decade.

## 1 Affordable Housing

“Affordable housing” means rental units at affordable prices for very low income singles and families. Such housing is critical to ending homelessness because its availability reduces the number of precariously housed people who are at-risk of homelessness because they lack resources to contend with unexpected expenses or crises. Like other cities across the country, Los Angeles – with its hourglass economy and large numbers of poor people – faces an enormous demand for affordable housing which it has not been able to accommodate.

Currently, many units defined by the government as “affordable” are actually priced for those with moderate incomes. Typically, publicly assisted housing is targeted to one of three income groups: extremely low (<30% area median income), very low (30-50%) or low (80%). In 2007, HUD publicly assisted housing income limits for a one-person household to qualify for housing assistance in the Los Angeles-Long Beach Metro Area were: \$15,550 for units targeted to extremely low income households, \$25,900 for very low income households, and \$41,450 for low income households.<sup>6</sup> This compares to annual income from county General Relief payments for a single person of \$2,652, annual income from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments of \$9,660, and a minimum-wage income of \$16,640 per year.<sup>7</sup>

With rents continuing to increase and the number of affordable housing units actually decreasing, affordable housing opportunities for very poor people continue to shrink and rent burdens are high. More than 27% of all renter households in 2006 paid more than 50% of their income on rent.<sup>8</sup> **The 2007 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Housing Needs Assessment reports that LA County needs 70,117 units of affordable housing for very low income households.** Additionally, this report notes that **14,497 of the total 15,593 total federally assisted units in Los Angeles are at risk of being lost** including 1,096 units lost to conversion and 3,250 Section 8 expirations due between 2006 and 2014.<sup>9</sup>

The federal Section 8 program provides vouchers for qualified tenant families as well as project-based vouchers. A total of 86,414 (tenant and project-based) vouchers were allocated in Los Angeles County via county and city authorities. The registration list to apply for Section 8 assistance from the City of Los Angeles is closed. The California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTAC) awarded \$7.4 million to leverage low income housing projects in Los Angeles County in 2007. Additionally, the LA County Homeless Prevention Initiative or HPI (2006) provides \$20 million for predevelopment costs associated with the creation of new affordable housing and \$32 million in capital, operating, and service funds for those operating homeless service programs.

The City of LA's Housing Element calls for over 4,000 new units of affordable housing yearly or 20,300 units between 2001 and 2006, but since 2001, the city has lost over 11,000 housing units,

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<sup>6</sup> HUD User Web Site. 2007. [www.huduser.org/datasets/il/il2007/2007summary.odt?inputname=METRO31100MM4480\\*Los+Angel es-Long+Beach%2C+CA+HUD+Metro+FMR+Area&selection\\_type=hmfa&year=2007](http://www.huduser.org/datasets/il/il2007/2007summary.odt?inputname=METRO31100MM4480*Los+Angel es-Long+Beach%2C+CA+HUD+Metro+FMR+Area&selection_type=hmfa&year=2007) (accessed December 2, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> The California minimum wage as of January 1, 2008 is \$8.00/hour. The annual estimate assumes a 40 hour work week and 52 weeks of work per year.

<sup>8</sup> American Community Survey, 2006. Detailed Table B25070.

<sup>9</sup> Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). 2007. *Regional Housing Needs Assessment*. Los Angeles, CA: SCAG.

close to the total amount produced during the same period.<sup>10</sup> This past year, the Community Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners planned to preserve more than 1,300 low-income rooms and turn approximately seven downtown hotels over to non-profits; however, this project has been temporarily put on hold. The City of Los Angeles' implementation of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, established in 2000, provides \$100 million in funding from a mix of sources, for proposed affordable housing development, including multifamily rental projects, lower income home ownership projects, and emergency rental assistance. Also, Los Angeles Mayor Villaraigosa's recent initiative to require new housing developments in Los Angeles to include units affordable to the poor and middle-class has potential, but its future is uncertain. And, as noted above, in order to reach the homeless and near-homeless populations, rents have to be much lower than they are in the typical affordable housing development.

<p>Additional affordable units required between 2001-2006 under LA City Housing Element:</p> <p><b>20,300</b></p>	<p>Net Change in Affordable Units:</p> <p><b>-11,000</b></p>
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Efforts have also been made to improve access to those affordable housing units that do exist. For example, the County created a Housing Resource Center Website that lists affordable, special needs, and emergency housing resources, and both postings by landlords and site usage is growing. Such efforts improve the ability of public and nonprofit agencies to match tenants to available housing within their means, but do not fill the enormous gap between need for, and supply of, affordable housing.

That **Los Angeles is falling far short of meeting planned objectives to build affordable housing** is highlighted by a comparison between affordable housing targets mandated in city general plans, and actual progress of affordable housing production. For example, a recent 2005-2006 comparison done for the City of LA,<sup>11</sup> shows that 549 of 2,750 planned units for Very Low Income Residents (<50% Area Median Income or AMI) were built; 519 of 1,488 planned units for Low Income Residents (51-80% AMI) were built; and no units out of 1,616 planned for Moderate Income Residents (81-120% AMI) were built. Thus **the city achieved only 8% of the planned level of affordable housing production.** This is despite the fact that the City receives a disproportionately large share of state affordable housing tax credits, and maintains a high rate of applications for state funding for projects. Few other cities in the county publicize their affordable housing production record, but the picture is unlikely to be any better and is probably worse, since most cities have less aggressive goals, lower levels of effort, and/or scarce funding for affordable housing development. Since this is a multi-year phenomenon, the accumulated backlog of planned but unbuilt affordable housing is huge and worsened during the most recent run-up in housing prices.

<sup>10</sup> Southern California Association of Nonprofit Housing, May 2007. *Change in Affordable Housing Stock in Los Angeles, 2001-2006.* [www.scanph.org/files/SCANPH\\_LAHousing06.pdf](http://www.scanph.org/files/SCANPH_LAHousing06.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> City of Los Angeles, 2005-2006. "Annual Progress Report on Implementation of the Housing Element: General Plan Report requirement pursuant to Section 65400 of the Government Code." Los Angeles, CA: City of Los Angeles.

## 2 Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent supportive housing provides long-term housing and support services for those with chronic mental and/or physical health problems such as mental disabilities, AIDS/HIV, and substance abuse issues, developmental challenges, and other disabling conditions.

**There is an estimated unmet need of 35,673 permanent supportive units in the portion of Los Angeles County covered by LAHSA (which does not include Pasadena, Glendale, or Long Beach).<sup>12</sup> The number of homeless persons per permanent supportive housing unit in the LAHSA inventory is 11 homeless person/unit or bed.**

The permanent supportive housing unit inventory in the 2007 Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LA County, not including Pasadena, Glendale, and Long Beach) totals 6,326 units, the new inventory in this area (defined as coming on line in that accounting year) totals 544 units, and the inventory under development totals 1,331 units. It must be noted that estimates of unmet need only reflect needs of a current cohort of homeless people with supportive housing needs. Even if units are developed to provide permanent supportive housing for those who need it today, without efforts to prevent homelessness among people with special needs, more and more permanent supportive housing will be needed—even assuming some share of those living in permanent supportive housing can ultimately transition to affordable housing.

Homeless persons per permanent supportive housing unit in LAHSA inventory:

**11 persons per bed**

The passage of Proposition 63 and the subsequent Mental Health Services Act (2004) have been instrumental in providing support. Starting this year, approximately \$31 million has been allocated to LA County through Proposition 63 for permanent supportive housing. In the wake of hospital dumping of patients and pressures to redevelop Skid Row, the need to provide permanent supportive housing has become even more urgent. One result is the LA County Homeless Initiative or HPI (2006) which targets some funds for permanent supportive housing. In addition, the County's 'Project 50' has pledged to place 50 chronic homeless people from Skid Row into supportive housing in a 100-day period.<sup>13</sup> The City of Los Angeles, which like other California cities has major responsibility for housing and community development within its jurisdiction, has also developed funding streams for permanent supportive housing for the homeless. The City has dedicated \$150 million over 3 years from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to the development of permanent supportive housing units. There are currently 600 units in the pipeline, and the City has established a 5-year goal of 2,200 units. It is important to note that these funds are not primarily City funds, but rather funds received from the federal government that are targeted for these purposes. To our knowledge, no City discretionary general fund revenue has been allocated for supportive housing. The funds

<sup>12</sup> Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). 2007. *2007 Continuum of Care*. Los Angeles, CA: LAHSA.

<sup>13</sup> Susannah Rosenblatt, "LA County Might Get New Homeless Program," *Los Angeles Times*. Nov. 19, 2007. [www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-homeless19nov19,0,749713.story](http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-homeless19nov19,0,749713.story).

have been used to leverage a wide variety of other funding sources, including tax credits, federal, state and county resources, and City of Industry affordable housing funds, under the rubric of a Permanent Supportive Housing Initiative that was created in 2006. This represents a major step forward, although a significant challenge remains, to secure sufficient funds for operations, maintenance, and especially social service supports. Through the LA HPI (2006), the County has allocated \$20 million for a Pre-Development Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) that can be used for funding costs associated with the predevelopment of affordable and supportive housing. Funds were awarded to a collaborative group (Low Income Investment Fund, Century Housing, and the Corporation for Supportive Housing), that established the LA County Housing Innovation Fund, LLC. This entity will combine RLF funds with their own funding of approximately \$36 million to make \$56 million available to housing developers to create supportive housing. Ultimately however, the measure of progress is not money allocated or in the pipeline, but units of supportive housing added. Here we lag behind efforts in other major urban areas.

### **3** Emergency and Transitional Shelter and Services

Emergency, transitional housing, and supportive services meet short-term shelter and assistance needs by providing shelter units and related social services, for homeless families and individuals. The need for such housing services far outstrips supply.

According to LAHSA's 2007 count, 83% of homeless people counted were unsheltered. Within the Continuum of Care area 44% of sheltered homeless people were staying in emergency shelter, while 52% were staying in transitional housing. Of those in emergency shelter, 85% were single, while 15% were individuals living in families; 61% were men, 27% women, and 11% under 18. Families were more dominant in transitional housing, where 34% of all residents were part of families. Over 70% of individuals living in transitional housing were men, while over 31% of those in families were women and 63% were children and youth; less than 6% were men. Much of the funding for new shelter beds and transitional housing units is derived from federal sources. In addition, the LA HPI (2006) provides some funds for emergency and transitional housing, and the City of LA has recently funded an additional 200 shelter beds.<sup>14</sup>

Ratio of homeless people to beds based on LAHSA 2007 count and shelter inventory:

**16 homeless persons per emergency shelter bed**

**9 homeless persons per transitional housing bed**

Currently in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LA County not including Pasadena, Glendale, and Long Beach), the inventory of year-round *emergency* housing units totals 4,240 beds. The new inventory of year-round beds totals 160. The inventory of year-round beds under development totals 52 beds. In contrast, the unmet needs total 4,905 beds. The current inventory of year-round *transitional* housing units totals 7,869 beds. The new inventory of year-round transitional beds totals 197. The inventory of year-round beds under development totals 30. In

<sup>14</sup> City of Los Angeles, Mayor's Office. 2007. [www.lacity.org/mayor/deliveringresults/results\\_housing.htm](http://www.lacity.org/mayor/deliveringresults/results_housing.htm).

contrast, the unmet needs total 13,880 year-round beds.<sup>15</sup> Thus unmet needs for emergency beds as estimated by LAHSA are slightly more than the current inventory itself, while unmet needs for transitional beds are almost double the current inventory. Unmet needs also dwarf either newly developed beds or beds in the pipeline. **Thus there is a major deficit in shelter capacity in the county.**

Number of beds in LAHSA inventory		
	Emergency	Transitional
Current	4,240	7,869
New	160	197
Under Development	52	301
Still Needed	4,905	13,880

In part the scale of such unmet needs reflects not only the number of unsheltered homeless people needing emergency or transitional shelter but also the shortage of permanent affordable housing; **a 2006 survey of family shelters in the county found that average lengths of stays had increased in 44%** of these facilities, with longer stays linked to lack of affordable housing availability.<sup>16</sup> Thus people are forced to stay in emergency or transitional housing longer than necessary, waiting for an inadequate permanent affordable housing stock to accommodate them.

## 4 Government Health and Welfare Programs

Government health programs offer health and mental health services to low-income individuals and families, while welfare programs provide basic support through financial or material assistance, including homeless prevention assistance and employment services. Both types of programs are crucial to homelessness prevention, but have proven inadequate to the tasks of preventing homelessness or helping most people exit the streets rapidly.

Major health-related programs, administered by the County, include Medi-Cal (California’s version of Medicaid), an insurance program for poor people, and an array of mental health programs including those funded under the California Mental Health Services Act of 2004. Such services are essential, since poor people have higher rates of chronic health and mental health problems relative to the rest of the population, that increase their risk of becoming homeless. For example, according to the California Health Interview Survey, in 2005 those living in poverty reported twice the rate of psychological distress compared to the general population in LA County. Once homeless, people living in shelters or on the street suffer disproportionately

<sup>15</sup> Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). 2006. *2006 Continuum of Care*. Los Angeles, CA: LAHSA.

<sup>16</sup> Shelter Partnership. 2006. *Operating at Capacity: Family Shelters in Los Angeles*. Los Angeles, CA: Shelter Partnership.

from health and mental health problems; the 2007 LAHSA Homeless Count found that over half of the homeless people surveyed reported suffering from depression, and over a third lived with a physical disability. **Homeless adults have higher rates of acute and chronic illnesses, and mental health challenges than the general population, with almost three-quarters reporting in 2007 that they were experiencing a disabling condition (mental or physical).** They often access health care providers (typically an emergency room) only after their health conditions have been exacerbated by the conditions in which they live.

Percent homeless people receiving Medi-Cal or Medicare in 2007: <b>15%</b>	Percent homeless people experiencing a disabling condition in 2007: <b>74%</b>
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Medical un-insurance is a major challenge throughout Los Angeles, with over 16 percent lacking medical insurance as of 2005, but coverage is radically limited for those who are poor: only 27 percent of poor people have insurance (mostly Medi-Cal), and homeless people are even more likely to lack health insurance.<sup>17</sup> Only 15% of those homeless people surveyed in the 2007 LAHSA Homeless Count reported receiving Medi-cal or Medicare.

The local public health system has not been able to fill these gaps in insurance coverage. The system faces enormous pressures. One major public hospital, Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital, has been closed and county officials recently proposed widespread closures of public health clinics and transfer of responsibilities to private clinics, in order to address large budget shortfalls. And in 2007 although the County received more than \$125 million under the California Mental Health Services Act to fund a variety of innovative programs, the Department of Mental Health’s core budget faces a reported \$70 million shortfall, resulting in reductions in service for many clients.<sup>18</sup>

On the income support side, programs include CalWORKs, California’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, Food Stamps, General Relief (GR), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), all potentially important for homeless individuals. CalWORKs, with 346,208 persons aided in September 2007, provides temporary financial assistance and employment services for eligible families. General Relief, with a September 2007 caseload of 61,024, is available for some poor single adults or certain immigrants who are ineligible for State and Federal Programs, while Supplemental Security Income, with a caseload of 402,699 persons as of December 2006, is available for those who are aged, blind, or disabled.

Percent GR recipients who reported being homeless: <b>60%</b>	County estimate of number of homeless GR recipients: <b>15,000-30,000</b>
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<sup>17</sup> California Health Interview Survey. 2007. [www.chis.ucla.edu](http://www.chis.ucla.edu).

<sup>18</sup> In Scott Gold and Lee Romney. 2007. "New Funds, Enduring Ills." *Los Angeles Times*. September 16, 2007. [www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-mental10,0,242474.story](http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-mental10,0,242474.story).

**From 1996 to 2006, the percent of Los Angeles County children who received CalWORKs as a share of children in poverty dropped from 71% to 49%.** At the beginning of 1996, there were 851,000 children in poverty and 598,000 children receiving CalWORKs assistance. At the end of 2006, there were 626,000 children in poverty and 295,000 children receiving CalWORKs. This decline in CalWORKs coverage has occurred despite the Legislature's express goals of reducing child poverty and ensuring that poor children receive public assistance, even if their parents become ineligible. The share of children in poverty who receive CalWORKs has declined more rapidly in Los Angeles County than in the balance of California, indicating that Los Angeles has been less effective than other regions in ensuring that impoverished children have access to available benefits.<sup>19</sup>

CalWORKs family members who are homeless (as indicated by their eligibility for CalWORKs Homeless Assistance):

**18,297 / 6.7%**

The more than 60,000 people on General Relief as of September 2007 received \$221 per month, which is only 40% of the 1991 federal poverty level for a single person. Benefit rates, which are dramatically lower than those associated with other programs such as CalWORKs and SSI, have not changed since 1993, and are the lowest among all large counties in high cost housing areas of California.

According to a recent LA County study, approximately 60% of a sample of 1,123 GR recipients who visited 13 Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) offices during a 4 month period in 2005-06 identified themselves as living in locations not meant for sleeping, such as outdoors, in parks, or streets; almost 40% characterized themselves as 'homeless'.<sup>20</sup> Since this is not necessarily a representative sample of GR recipients, the County has indicated the need for more comprehensive research on this issue. Their general estimate is that **15,000 to 30,000 GR recipients are homeless**, although because these estimates are based on self-reports, it is difficult to determine the exact number of homeless GR clients.

Over 44,000 GR recipients (74%) are categorized as 'unemployable'. Most are disabled; many of these individuals are determined to have a short-term disability that does not qualify them for Federal SSI, but many could qualify for SSI. LA County helps qualify those individuals, regardless of whether they are sanctioned for some infraction of GR rules or procedures. However, the current rate at which GR recipients become qualified for SSI has been relatively slow so far. According to a recent survey of homeless in Los Angeles County, only 20.2% of homeless individuals were enrolled in SSI/SSDI.<sup>21</sup> Moving recipients from GR to SSI both saves money for LA County and increases the amount of money received per month by welfare recipients from \$221 (GR) to \$805

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<sup>19</sup> Economic Roundtable, "Welfare Reform and Poverty: L.A.'s Bargain with the Poor." California State University, Los Angeles Seminar Presentation, November 27, 2007.

<sup>20</sup> Michael A. Bono. 2007. *General Relief Survey 2006, Report Number 1: Homeless and Help Seeking*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services. The County believes that these data should not be relied up because the sample obtained was not random. Despite this issue, however, this is by far the best data available. We are unaware of any systematic biases in the sample.

<sup>21</sup> Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). 2007. *2007 Homeless Count Report*. Los Angeles, CA: LAHSA.

(SSI), and should be a high priority for the County.<sup>22</sup> From September 2005 through August 2006, 4,972 people formerly on County GR were moved to Federal SSI.<sup>23</sup> The County seeks to increase this rate and has allocated \$2 million from the LA County HPI to increase capacity of staff and nonprofit agencies to get clients onto SSI and other benefits to which they are entitled.

In addition, 6.7% of all CalWORKs are homeless.<sup>24</sup> Between October 2006 and September 2007, 21,829 requests for CalWORKs Homeless Assistance were processed, including 18,297 requests approved and 3,532 requests denied.<sup>25</sup>

Los Angeles County children who receive CalWORKs compared to children in poverty:

**626,000 children in poverty**  
**295,000 children receiving CalWORKs**  
**Only 47% of poor children receive CalWORKs assistance**

**The high number of homeless people on government support highlights the inadequacy of eviction-prevention and income maintenance services,** since basic welfare programs should enable people to stay housed.

## **5** Emergency Food Provisions

Homeless people must often face the choice between eating and getting access to shelter. One important avenue for nutritional support is through food assistance. Although emergency food services are often received through non-profit food pantries or soup kitchens, governmental welfare programs offering help with Food Stamps remains the most important program for those with food insecurity. Additionally, residents in LA County use other government programs, such as Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and School Meals programs.

According to *Hunger in Los Angeles County 2006*, which surveys a sample of the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank's network of approximately 1,000 food pantries, soup kitchens, and other emergency food service organizations' clients, **approximately 957,000 adult residents were food insecure in 2003, and 287,000 went hungry in LA County.**<sup>26</sup> Of particular concern, this report states that Food Stamps tend to last only two a half weeks in a given month. The County's Department of Public Health similarly estimates that in 2005, 471,000 households with incomes

<sup>22</sup> Los Angeles County, Department of Social Services. 2005. *Supplemental Security Income Assistance Program (SSIAP)*. [dps.lacounty.gov/dpss/ssiap/ssiap\\_overview.cfm](http://dps.lacounty.gov/dpss/ssiap/ssiap_overview.cfm); Wolch, J., Dear, M., Blasi, G., Flaming, D., Tepper, P., and Koegel, P. with Warshawsky, D. 2007. *Ending Homelessness in Los Angeles*. Los Angeles, CA: Inter-University Consortium Against Homelessness.

<sup>23</sup> Los Angeles County. August 2006. *General Relief/CAPI/SSIAP – in Brief*. Los Angeles, CA: LA County DPSS.

<sup>24</sup> Los Angeles County, Department of Public Social Services. 2005. *CalWORKs Homeless Families*. Los Angeles, CA: LA County DPSS.

<sup>25</sup> California Department of Social Services, 2007. *CalWorks Homeless Assistance Program (CA 237 HA)*. Sacramento, CA: State of California.

<sup>26</sup> Los Angeles Regional Food Bank. 2006. *Hunger in Los Angeles County, 2006*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Regional Food Bank.

<sup>27</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, September 2007. *Food Insecurity Increasing in Los Angeles County*. Los Angeles, CA: LA County DPH.

below 300% of the federal poverty line (FPL) were food insecure, up 17% from 2002-03.<sup>27</sup> During the 2001-2005 period 62% of food pantries, and 69% of the county's soup kitchens experienced an increase in the number of clients served.<sup>28</sup>

<b>Food insecurity among LA County households 2005<sup>29</sup></b>	
Number/percent of food insecure households living below 300% Federal Poverty Line:	Increase in food insecure households living below 300% Federal Poverty Line between 2002-03 and 2005:
<b>471,000 or 25.5%</b>	<b>17%</b>

In 2004, Los Angeles County launched a program to increase Food Stamp utilization, and as of May 2007, this campaign has led to a 12-month average of 97,173 Food Stamp Only (FSO) recipients, an 18% average increase in the FSO caseload from June 2006 to May 2007.<sup>30</sup> In addition, the County began a Food Stamp Restaurant Meals program in 2005, for homeless people as well as elderly and disabled individuals. As of 2007, this program is rapidly growing but remains small, providing approximately 15,000 meals in 2006-07.<sup>31</sup> While both programs clearly help to reduce food insecurity, many people remain hungry or at risk of going hungry.

Percent GR recipients in a recent study who reported cutting size of meals or skipping meals:
<b>50%</b>

According to a recent LA County study of 1,123 GR recipients surveyed at 13 DPSS office locations over a 4 month period in 2006-07, 50% cut the size of meals or skipped meals, because of insufficient money for food.<sup>32</sup> Although this study is not representative of the entire GR or homeless GR population, and the County has indicated the need for more comprehensive research on this issue, it is indicative of food insecurity among those seeking GR support. Recent data surveying the homeless population in Los Angeles County found that 55% of homeless people receive Food Stamps.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Los Angeles Regional Food Bank. 2006. *Hunger in Los Angeles County, 2006*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Regional Food Bank.

<sup>29</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, September 2007. "Food Insecurity Increasing in Los Angeles County" Los Angeles, CA: LA County DPH.

<sup>30</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services, personal communication, December 2007.

<sup>31</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services. 2007. *Report on Implementation of the Restaurant Meals Program for the Homeless, Elderly, and Disabled Using Electronic Benefit (EBT) Cards to Purchase Prepared Meals (Board Order #38 - February 4, 2003)*. July 10. Los Angeles, CA: LA County DPSS.

<sup>32</sup> Michael A. Bono. 2007. *General Relief Survey 2006, Report Number 2: Food Insecurity and Hunger*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services. The County believes that these data should not be relied up because the sample obtained was not random. Despite this issue, however, this is by far the best data available. We are unaware of any systematic biases in the sample.

<sup>33</sup> Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). 2006. *2006 Continuum of Care*. Los Angeles, CA: LAHSA.

Importantly, the non-profit sector, such as the LA Regional Food Bank and its member network must collectively withstand the burden from inadequate Food Stamp services, lack of maximum participation in Food Stamps among those who are eligible, and low public assistance levels.<sup>34</sup> Increasing demand for food assistance from area food banks comes at a time of dwindling surplus food resources; 3 million fewer meals were provided by Los Angeles food banks in 2007 than in 2006.<sup>35</sup>

## **6** Work Force Opportunities

Employment is a major pathway out of homelessness and job training, education and placement are critical issues. Finding high paying jobs with good benefits has been increasingly difficult in the context of a relatively stagnant economy. Despite this fact, a 2004 study indicated that 41% of homeless residents worked in the year preceding that year in which they were identified as homeless, and that 68% had worked in the preceding 5 years.<sup>36</sup> Almost a third of CalWORKs Homeless Family Project participants, for recipient parents with mental disabilities, worked at some time during the 16-month study period.<sup>37</sup> These studies indicate that employment is within the grasp of a significant share of homeless people, even those with significant additional challenges.

With the implementation of CalWORKs welfare-to-work programs, however, many low income individuals have been funneled into low paying jobs. **Even with employment, most CalWORKs recipients remained very poor and often faced the loss of housing.** Between April and June of 2007, only 9,039 of the total 49,068 single parent families enrolled in CalWORKs/Welfare to Work were actually employed (18.42%), while only 2,740 of the total 12,045 two parent families enrolled in CalWORKs/Welfare to Work were employed.<sup>38</sup> Wages in the CalWORKs/Welfare to Work program tend to be low. From 1998 to 2001, median earnings during the first quarter of the first, second, and third years among CalWORKs participants were only \$2,430, \$3,315, and \$3,709 respectively. When projected for the full year, these earnings totaled \$9,720 to \$14,836,<sup>39</sup> and thus not surprisingly, many remain eligible for a partial CalWORKs grant until they reach their five-year life-time limit on CalWORKs assistance (although they remain eligible for other CalWORKs services). Currently the earned income of a single parent with two children must reach \$1,672 per month or \$20,064 per year before such eligibility is lost; the median income of single parent CalWORKs recipients in LA County in 2006 averaged between \$2,047 and \$2,135 per quarter, or \$8,394 on an annual basis.

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<sup>34</sup> Los Angeles Regional Food Bank. 2006. *Hunger in Los Angeles County 2006*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Regional Food Bank.

<sup>35</sup> CBS News. 2007. "Food Pantry Cupboards Growing Bare," November 19. [www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/11/19/health/main3520997.shtml](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/11/19/health/main3520997.shtml); Los Angeles Regional Food Bank. 2006. *Hunger in Los Angeles County, 2006*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Regional Food Bank.

<sup>36</sup> Economic Roundtable. 2004. *Homeless in LA: Final Research Report for the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Los Angeles County*. Los Angeles, CA: Economic Roundtable.

<sup>37</sup> California Institute for Mental Health, 2007. *Helping Homeless Families in Los Angeles*. Los Angeles, CA: LA County Department of Mental Health.

<sup>38</sup> California Department of Social Services, 2007. *Welfare to Work Quarterly Report, April – June 2007*. Sacramento, CA: State of California.

<sup>39</sup> Los Angeles County, 2003. *Employment and Earnings among Welfare-to-Work Participants in Los Angeles County, 1998-2001*. Los Angeles, CA: LA County.

Percentage of CalWORKs clients who are employed:

**18%**

Median yearly salary of CalWORKs recipients:

**\$9,720-\$14,836**

In recognition of the fact that CalWORKs recipients may be homeless or at-risk of homelessness, the County implemented a 'Homeless Policy' for those enrolled in the Greater Avenues to Independence (GAIN) program, that involves expedited services, support from a specialized homeless services staff, housing search assistance and job readiness programs.

According to data from the state's Economic Development Department's Occupational Employment Statistics survey for Los Angeles County, of the occupations with the most projected job openings between 2004 and 2014, 63% are in fields with 30 days or less on-the-job training; however, the average wage of these 515,260 jobs is only \$9.36 per hour. Additionally, 45% of the projected 146,257 average annual job openings in LA County between 2004 and 2014 are in occupations with 30 days or less on-the-job training, and the average wage is only \$9.60 per hour. This means that **a significant percentage of the job growth expected in Los Angeles County will be in low paying occupations with wages below the \$11.84 mandated under LA County's Living Wage ordinance as constituting a living wage.**<sup>40</sup>

## **7** Homeless Civil Liberties

Homeless civil liberties refer to the basic human and Constitutional rights of homeless individuals. Infringements of civil liberties — for example, when street dwellers have their belongings confiscated during sweeps despite having no other place to go — can multiply the problems that homeless people face in exiting the street. Moreover, arrests and even brief incarceration can upset fragile lives, while people swept up in police sting operations and convicted for minor drug-related offences may face life-time exclusion from government assistance programs, further reducing their chances of rejoining the mainstream. Indigent homeless people who are issued citations for offenses that might be overlooked elsewhere face future arrest and jail time when they are unable to pay fines.

In 2006, **the City of LA in conjunction with the LA Police Department initiated the Safer Cities Initiative which was to combine aggressive policing with the provision of social services or alternatives to incarceration** (the "Streets or Services" program or SOS). This Initiative placed fifty police officers in the 0.85 square mile Skid Row area near downtown and greatly increased drug enforcement in the area. But few if any resources were allocated to the "services" side of the initiative. Between August 1, 2006 and June 1, 2007, the Safer Cities Initiative resulted in 10,342 citations written, 5,070 felony arrests, 2,218 misdemeanor arrests, 240 arrests on warrants, 306 LAPD mental health contacts, and 34 SOS program graduates. The low number of SOS graduates reflects both problems with the program and the lack of funding (\$100,000 allocated by the City Attorney from his discretionary funds). While it is not possible to track the

<sup>40</sup> Los Angeles County, 1999. *Living Wage Ordinance*. State of California, Employment Development Department, 2007. *Occupational Wages*. Sacramento, CA: State of California. State of California, Employment Development Department, 2007. *Projections of Employment*. Sacramento, CA: State of California.

share of homeless versus housed people receiving citations or being arrested, the dominance of the homeless population in Skid Row and the types of infractions suggests that many of those targeted by the Safer Cities have been homeless. The great majority of these citations include petty offenses, such as littering or crosswalk violations.

Number of Skid Row residents cited or arrested  
for crimes under the Safer Cities Initiative:

**18,210**

In 2007 the City and civil rights lawyers settled a class action on behalf of homeless individuals subject to the City's ordinance prohibiting sitting, lying, or sleeping on a sidewalk. The settlement provides that homeless individuals will not be arrested between 9pm and 6am anywhere in the City of LA, until 1,250 additional permanent supportive housing beds come on line. The settlement was thus based on the demonstrable lack of available shelter beds.<sup>41</sup> The City Attorney has sought a grant from through the County's Homeless Prevention Initiative or HPI to significantly expand the reach of the Streets or Services (SOS) diversion program.

**Some progress has been made to help homeless people resolve legal problems and expunge criminal records in order to reduce barriers to employment and certain forms of public assistance.** Through the County's Greater Opportunities for Work (GROW) program for individuals receiving General Relief, eligible recipients are referred to legal aid organizations for assistance in expunging their records. Also, a Homeless Criminal Court program was established in 2000 via collaboration between the Los Angeles County Superior Court, the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office, the Los Angeles Public Defender's Office, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, and homeless advocacy organizations including Public Counsel. In part funded by the LA HPI, this specialized court helps homeless individuals resolve tickets, bench warrants, minor offenses and misdemeanors, but requires homeless people coming before the court to have completed an approved 90-day case management program. The City of Santa Monica, with County support, also created a Homeless Community Court, for similar purposes, and in addition provides stabilization services for homeless defendants. Last, the County allocated HPI funds to the Department of Mental Health for operational support of its Co-Occurring Disorder Mental Health Court. All of these efforts, however effective, are evidence of the additional burdens created by homelessness on an already crowded justice system.

**But as of 2006, Los Angeles was still ranked among the nation's twenty (20) "meanest cities" on the basis of its laws and ordinances policing the homeless.<sup>42</sup> And in contravention of international human rights accords, Los Angeles (like other cities across the country, with the exception of those in New York), had no recognized right to housing.**

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<sup>41</sup> Blasi, G. 2007. Policing Our Way Out of Homelessness? *The First Year of the Safer Cities Initiative on Skid Row*; Office of the Mayor of Los Angeles. June 5, 2007. *Safer Cities Initiative Fact Sheet*.

<sup>42</sup> National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty and the National Coalition for the Homeless. 2006. *A Dream Denied: The Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities*. Washington, D.C.: NCH and NLCHP.

## 8 Regional Fair Share

Ensuring that all communities accept their fair share of housing and services for homeless people is critical to the development of long-term solutions to homelessness. Many municipalities fail to address homelessness adequately and effectively shift their homelessness “problem” onto Skid Row. As noted in the Economic Roundtable and Weingart Center’s *10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness* (2004)<sup>43</sup> most municipalities in LA County spend significantly less than 1% of their total operating budget on homeless services or housing needs. LA County itself committed \$7.1 million to open five regional homeless centers throughout LA County. However, after intense opposition almost succeeded in blocking the siting of transitional housing to be located in a remote canyon in the Antelope Valley, as well as negative reaction from other localities, LA County has shifted its emphasis from stabilization centers to smaller scale programs developed with more input from individual Supervisors, local civic leaders, and community agencies.<sup>44</sup>

An analysis of the total inventory of emergency and transitional shelter beds and permanent supportive units in each Service Planning Area (SPA) in LA County as a percentage of total homeless people per SPA shows that the **Metro region maintains a disproportionate percentage of the inventory**, greater than their share of the county’s sheltered homeless population. In contrast the San Gabriel Valley and South Los Angeles in particular have a smaller percentage than needed, based on their share of the total homeless population, and the

<b>Homeless Population, Shelter Beds and Permanent Supportive Housing Units, and Sheltered Homeless by LA County Service Planning Area (SPA)</b>			
<b>SPA</b>	<b>% of County’s Homeless Population</b>	<b>% of County’s Total Beds*</b>	<b>% of County’s Homeless Sheltered</b>
Antelope Valley	3%	2%	2%
San Fernando	9%	14%	10%
San Gabriel Valley	14%	3%	8%
Metro	32%	52%	49%
West	10%	10%	9%
South	17%	5%	9%
South East	8%	6%	6%

\*Includes emergency and transitional shelter beds and supportive housing units.

<sup>43</sup> Daniel Fleming and Paul Tepper: 2004. *10-Year Strategy To End Homelessness*. Los Angeles, CA. Economic Roundtable/ Institute for the Study of Homelessness and Poverty at the Weingart Center.

<sup>44</sup> Susannah Rosenblatt. 2007. “County’s Homeless Initiative Hits Skids, Heads in a Different Direction.” *Los Angeles Times*. October 7.

homeless sheltered population.<sup>45</sup> **Skid Row (part of Metro) alone had 45% of the County's entire inventory targeted to individuals.** Importantly, the high percentages of beds in the Metro SPA do not imply that the supply is greater than demand, since the entire county-wide inventory falls so radically short of needs. Rather, these figures are simply an indicator of how little other SPAs contribute to homeless services in relation to the distribution of homeless SPA residents.

## **9** Leadership and Collaboration

One of the reasons that homelessness remains a crisis in Los Angeles is a failure of leadership—within government at all levels, as well as within our local communities and voluntary organizations. Conflicts between the City and County governments, for example, over the division of responsibility for addressing homelessness ended in lawsuits, settlements, and the formation of a joint powers authority (LAHSA). A recent collaborative planning effort, Bring LA Home, ended without a plan that could be widely embraced by stakeholders. Homeless services providers, often confined by funding regulations, have often been competitors rather than collaborators, hindering the creation of an effective advocacy movement. And aside from a few notable places, most communities have relied on other jurisdictions to solve what is in fact a region-wide problem, instead of collaborating to address this challenge.

**There was significant progress on leadership and collaboration this past year.** A new and dynamic leader was appointed to direct the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), and the agency is set on a new course that is designed to increase its coordination, planning, and evaluation capacities. LAHSA has also become more effective at blending diverse funding sources with multiple restrictions.

The County brought together a group of homeless experts from across the country, and on the basis of their recommendations the Board of Supervisors initiated “Project 50,” a \$3.6 million effort to place 50 chronically homeless residents of Skid Row in supportive housing units within 100 days. The City also collaborated in project design, funded the housing units, and helped with street outreach to identify potential participants. Mechanisms for providing services for homeless residents are still being worked out, and the 100-day deadline was missed, but this is a model that appears replicable and is expected to grow in scale over time. The County designated a homeless coordinator, and also created an interagency working group to develop solutions to homelessness and assigned senior leadership to lead the effort.

In the City of Los Angeles, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa created a Permanent Supportive Housing Initiative in 2006, and in 2007 fought to increase LAHSA’s resources so that it can be an effective area-wide planning organization. A high-level point person focused on homelessness and collaborative leadership efforts was appointed and an interdepartmental “housing cabinet” was formed to coordinate efforts and blend funding to maximize affordable housing production, both initiatives that deserve to be institutionalized. Despite fiscal challenges, the City has allocated \$50 million annually to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Less encouragingly, an Ad Hoc City Council Committee was formed to work on homeless

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<sup>45</sup> Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). 2007. *2007 Homeless Count Report*. Los Angeles, CA: LAHSA. Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) 2007. Shelter Inventory data file 081407.

issues, although its effectiveness to date remains limited to helping fund 300 beds in a large shelter located in a warehousing district.

The City and County have begun working together on ways to develop seamless programs designed to help homeless people with multiple needs. The most recent LAHSA Super Notice of Funding Availability (NoFA) for Continuum of Care funds included a goal of coordinating services with housing, a strategy that should increasingly involve the County in partnerships with homeless housing efforts. The City's latest Permanent Supportive Housing NoFA involves a wide range of city agencies and funding sources, and was developed in collaboration with LAHSA, thus providing a link to the County (since LAHSA is a joint powers authority). The County is partnering with the City through its Project Review Committee (PRC) to evaluate service components of NoFA proposals, and create stronger linkages to County services for pipeline housing projects. Even more tightly coupled City-County-LAHSA efforts could underlie a strategy to seamlessly link all existing as well as planned homeless housing units to services, for residents who require such support and in so doing, greatly expanding the supply of permanent supportive housing.

The Gateway Cities Council of Governments, with \$1.2 million from the County, is working with PATH Partners to develop a regional strategy to reduce homelessness in its 27 member cities. The San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, with County funding, is replicating this process for its 31 member cities, with the Corporation for Supportive Housing serving as its consultant. New programs have emerged; for example, Santa Monica established a Chronic Homeless Program that is working to get long-time homeless people off the streets. And major nonprofit organizations have taken on leadership roles, particularly the United Way, which sponsored HomeWalk, and the Corporation for Supportive Housing and Common Ground, both working to bring local homeless service providers together with policy-makers, agency staff, advocates, and academics to pursue successful models for addressing homelessness.

Despite these signs of progress, there is a long way to go. **There is no 10-year plan to end homelessness in Los Angeles.** Although not a federal requirement, it is strongly recommended by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. Moreover, as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development increasingly prioritizes homeless housing versus shelter in its Continuum of Care funding, Los Angeles has no explicit strategy to transition service providers to this newer model. In Skid Row, in spite of small-scale efforts like Project 50, the dominant response has been policing. The nonprofit service sector remains fragmented and competitive. With important exceptions, most municipal leaders do very little to address homelessness. And although there have been recent strides in leadership and collaboration that deserve praise and recognition, homeless strategies with the power, resources, and scale needed to end homelessness have yet to emerge.



