

**ADDITIONAL DETAILS: CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
PILOT FOR GUARANTEED INCOME FOR OLDER ADULTS
HISTORY, DATA, DEMOGRAPHICS, PARTNERS, AND FUNDING**

West Hollywood’s History and Priority Initiatives Lead to a Pilot for Guaranteed Income:

The City of West Hollywood was created by groundbreakers - a coalition of older adults, LGBT activists, and renters - seeking a community where they could live free from discrimination and age in their community. The City’s mission is to be “proactive in responding to the unique needs of our diverse community...and dedicated to preserving and enhancing its well-being.”ⁱ Since the City’s incorporation in 1984, the City Council has affirmed this mission by establishing and advancing priorities to protect and support people: developing housing policies that stabilize rental costs, creating ordinances prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and HIV status, investing in affordable housing, and contracting with non-profit agencies to provide a continuum of social services for community members. The current work to address the social service needs of the community is framed through three strategic initiatives: West Hollywood Aging in Place/Aging in Community Initiativeⁱⁱ, West Hollywood Homeless Initiativeⁱⁱⁱ, and West Hollywood Poverty Reduction Initiative.

In response to the growing challenges of financial insecurity, which have only been exacerbated by the impacts of COVID19, the City has been evaluating strategies, including guaranteed income, to do more to support these groundbreakers to help them age in place, prevent homelessness and reduce the stressors of financial insecurity.

Data and Demographics that Support the Need for a Pilot for Older Adults:

Statewide research and our own local data show that older adults often experience tremendous financial insecurity.

California’s Master Plan for Aging highlights the challenges, including poverty and homelessness, that are facing older adults. “Approximately 20 percent of all people 65 and in California live in poverty”^{iv} and “a particularly alarming trend is that residents over age 50 are now the fastest growing population of homeless people in many parts of the state.”^v

These trends highlight the financial vulnerability of older adults throughout California which is reflected locally in the most recent West Hollywood Community Study - even before COVID and record-high inflation. Specifically, the 2019 West Hollywood Community Study and corresponding Demographic Report captured the following relevant data:^{vi}

- 14% of West Hollywood residents’ incomes are officially below the Federal Poverty Level
- 27% of the City’s residents live on household incomes between 0-200% of the Federal Poverty Level
- 44% of the residents living in poverty are older adults ages 55 years+
- 80% of West Hollywood households are renters

The UCLA Center for Health Policy Research “Elder Economic Security Standard Index” helps to further illuminate that the basic needs budget for older adults who live in high-rent areas like Los Angeles County [West Hollywood], in high-cost states like California is closer to twice the Federal Poverty Level (“FPL”).^{vii}

Because government benefit programs are often limited to helping people with annual budgets closer to the FPL, many people living at even 200% FPL are forced to make difficult choices between paying for rent, utilities, transportation, medical costs or food.

Pilot Partners:

The infrastructure required to successfully operate a guaranteed income demonstration is complex -- it requires an evaluation partner, an implementation partner, and disbursement partner. However, the benefit is that guaranteed income pilots serve as both social initiative and research study -- providing a service to the community, while also offering the opportunity to learn valuable information that will inform the creation of future, evidence-based policies and programs.

The City is engaging two non-profit partners in the pilot. The first is the Center for Guaranteed Income Research (CGIR) at University of Pennsylvania. CGIR, as the research and evaluation partner, is responsible for creating and administering the research instruments, conducting the randomized selection of eligible applicants to participate in the pilot, collecting/processing/analyzing the data, and providing a report on the findings.

CGIR is conducting the research/evaluation for more than 29 guaranteed income pilots throughout the country and offers a unique and highly specialized level of expertise in an emerging area of study. The co-directors of CGIR were the design and research team for the well-known Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (SEED) and bring more than two decades of expertise in research, advocacy and social work practice on economic justice and asset building. The Center’s proficiency at mixed-method data collection will allow the City of West Hollywood to gather focused data on the impact of guaranteed income as a means of increasing financial stability and reducing poverty.

The City’s second partner in the pilot is the of National Council of Jewish Women Los Angeles (“NCJW|LA”) as the non-profit administrator. A competitive Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process led to the selection of the agency to implement the pilot. NCJW|LA was selected for its knowledge, experience, and understanding of the nuances of guaranteed income. NCJW|LA developed and has been implementing a guaranteed micro-pilot for caregivers. In addition to its work in the area of guaranteed income, NCJW|LA has partnered with the City for decades to provide various social services to a wide range of community members. NCJW has also been one of the two City-contracted agencies providing rental assistance to community members in need, a program that has grown exponentially due to the impacts of COVID.

In its role as non-profit administrator of the pilot for guaranteed income, NCJW|LA is responsible for conducting outreach to the community about the pilot, assisting community members to

complete applications, submitting the completed applications to CGIR for the randomized selection of participants, notifying the participants selected by CGIR, and then verifying that West Hollywood residency and other pilot criteria are met to ensure the eligibility of each participant selected. As the non-profit administrator, NCJW is also responsible for conducting onboarding, including providing individualized benefits counseling for each participant through a subcontracted non-profit partner. NCJW|LA is also charged with managing a storytelling cohort and storytelling activities that complement the research component of the pilot and provide the participants an opportunity to share their experiences in their own voices. In addition, NCJW|LA subcontracts and coordinates services with a non-profit financial distributor (utilizing debit card services) to ensure that funds are distributed to participants in a timely, predictable, and seamless fashion.

As the participants' distribution funds will not come from City funds, NCJW|LA receives pass-through funds from West Hollywood's allocation of Los Angeles County Measure H funds through the Westside Cities Council of Governments (COG) and directly from an individual philanthropic donor (as discussed below). Finally, NCJW|LA works with other City-contracted non-profit agency partners to connect participants with available social services based on need and interest.

Pilot Funding:

The City is funding the administrative costs of the pilot from funds budgeted for fiscal year 2021-2022 and 2022-23 for the agreement for research/evaluation services with CGIR and the non-profit administrator services with NCJW|LA.

The \$450,000 in direct disbursements funds to participants (\$1,000 to each of the 25 participants for 18 months) comes from two external sources: (1) \$337,500 come from the Los Angeles County Measure H Innovation funds for homelessness prevention, distributed through the Westside Cities Council of Governments (COG) to the City and passed through to NCJW|LA, the non-profit administrator and (2) the balance, \$112,500, comes from a private donor, Dr. Sharon Dailey, a University of Pennsylvania alumnus who is interested in guaranteed income projects, supporting older adults, and honoring her late partner of 39 years, Patricia Dengler.

ⁱ City of West Hollywood. *Mission Statement & Core Values*. Retrieved May 19, 2022, from <https://www.weho.org/city-government/city-manager/capital-projects/strategic-initiatives-archive/strategic-plan/mission-statement-core-values#:~:text=As%20a%20premiere%20city%2C%20we,and%20enhancing%20its%20well%20being.>

ⁱⁱ City of West Hollywood. *Strategic Initiatives*. Retrieved May 19, 2022, from <https://www.weho.org/city-government/city-departments/human-services-rent-stabilization/strategic-initiatives>

ⁱⁱⁱ City of West Hollywood. *Strategic Initiatives*. Retrieved May 19, 2022, from <https://www.weho.org/city-government/city-departments/human-services-rent-stabilization/strategic-initiatives>

^{iv} California Master Plan for Aging. *Master Plan: 5 Bold Goals*. Retrieved May 19, 2022, from <https://mpa.aging.ca.gov/Goals/5>

^v California Master Plan for Aging. *Master Plan: 5 Bold Goals*. Retrieved May 19, 2022, from <https://mpa.aging.ca.gov/Goals/5>

^{vi} City of West Hollywood. *2019 Community Study*, 10, 11, 29. Retrieved July 22, 2021, from <https://www.weho.org/services/social-services/community-study>.

^{vii} UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. *Elder Index Dashboard*. Retrieved August 1, 2021, from <https://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/programs/health-disparities/elder-health/elder-index-data/Pages/CostOfLiving.aspx>