

**SUBJECT: CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD HOMELESS INITIATIVE:
OVERVIEW OF SERVICES AND IMPACT METRICS**

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STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT:

The City Council will receive a report on the City of West Hollywood's contracted homeless services programs and a summary of program impact metrics.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and discuss.

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:

During its February meeting, the City Council Subcommittee asked for an overview of the City's homeless services, efforts undertaken by service providers, and an analysis of the number of individuals these providers have served. In response to this request, staff has compiled this report, drawing from two previous reports presented to the City Council on January 22, 2024: the "[West Hollywood Homeless Initiative: 2023 Update on Five-Year Plan to Address Homelessness](#)" and the "[2022-23 Year-End Report on Social Services Programs](#)."

Overview of the City of West Hollywood Homeless Initiative

The City of West Hollywood recognizes the roles of Los Angeles County and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) in tackling the regional homeless crisis. The West Hollywood Homeless Initiative functions within this framework, shaping the

City's role as the creator and implementor of localized solutions that align with the broader strategies of the County and LAHSA.

The West Hollywood Homeless Initiative embodies a comprehensive, collaborative effort, engaging City Departments, City-contracted social service providers, the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, and County agencies.

Social Services Contracted Providers and Services

The social services programs funded by the City of West Hollywood are a critical component of the City's Homeless Initiative, serving as the cornerstone in the City's comprehensive strategy to address homelessness. A list of City-contracted non-profit agencies that primarily serve people experiencing homelessness, along with a brief description of their services and a summary of 2023 program outcomes data, follows:

Ascencia

Ascencia's services target immediate needs and sustainable housing by providing the following:

- **Connection to Service:** Helps clients create a housing plan and obtain resources necessary to maintain stable housing, including SSI/SSDI benefits and identification documents.
- **Emergency Shelter:** Provides ten beds for community members.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing Placements:** Facilitates access to housing vouchers, housing navigation, and comprehensive support services.
- **Street Outreach:** Engages with unhoused individuals, offering essential services and housing assistance.
- **Housing Retention Services:** Helps formerly unhoused community members remain housed by providing lease compliance support, legal support, and financial management guidance.
- **Summary of 2023 Program Outcomes**
 - The agency assisted 116 clients with accessing mainstream services (181% of goal). Ascencia also surpassed its permanent housing placement objective by housing 16 clients (107% of goal) and provided 3,015 emergency shelter bed nights to 40 people (116% of goal).

Being Alive

Being Alive offers a Syringe Services Program and provides case management, mental health support, and wellness services for people living with HIV, some of whom are experiencing homelessness.

- **Harm Reduction Services:** Provides syringe exchange, naloxone, fentanyl test strips, risk reduction counseling, safer smoking supplies, and linkage to substance use treatment services.
- **Summary 2023 Program Outcomes**
 - 174 new, unduplicated people participated in the Syringe Services Program (725% of goal); and the agency distributed 1,374 Narcan doses (1,010% of goal) and 1,094 Fentanyl Test Strips (304% of goal).

Healthcare in Action

Healthcare in Action employs street medicine to address immediate health concerns, chronic conditions, and continuity of care for unhoused community members through the following services:

- **Medical Services:** Provides acute and longitudinal care through street medicine, including prescriptions and medication management.
- **Mental Health Support:** Offers psychotherapy and psychiatric care, including psychotropic medications.
- **Street Outreach:** Links unhoused individuals with essential services and housing assistance.
- **Substance Use Services:** Provides substance use treatment, naloxone, syringe exchange, and linkage to residential treatment programs.
- **Additional Services:** Assistance with documentation, benefits enrollment, and housing navigation.
- **Summary 2023 Program Outcomes**
 - The agency conducted 1,778 patient interactions (148% of goal). Healthcare in Action also placed 24 individuals into transitional or permanent housing (200% of its goal).

Housing Works

Housing Works provides the following services :

- **Housing Navigation:** Aids in finding suitable housing for voucher-approved individuals as part of the Continuum of Care program.
- **Street Outreach:** Connects individuals experiencing homelessness with housing voucher programs.
- **Voucher Application:** Assists in completing and submitting applications for housing assistance vouchers.
- **Wrap-Around Services:** Supports formerly homeless individuals in maintaining housing stability.
- **Summary of 2023 Program Outcomes**
 - This program demonstrated effectiveness in helping clients maintain housing stability, with a 95% housing retention rate among participants.

Step Up

Step Up provides a range of services for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and living with mental health conditions:

- **Street Outreach:** Provides social services navigation, linkage to medical care, and emergency housing placement.
- **Mental Health Support:** Provides psychotherapy, crisis intervention, and psychiatric care, including medication management.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing:** Assists in locating and securing housing options.
- **Housing Retention Services:** Offers intensive case management to maintain housing stability among formerly unhoused community members.
- **Summary of 2023 Program Outcomes**
 - This program met 100% of its goal for permanent housing placements by securing housing for 15 clients. Step Up also fulfilled outreach and assessment with 830 client engagements (104% of goal).

TransLatin@ Coalition

While not an agency that primarily serves people experiencing homelessness, TransLatin@ Coalition has a significant proportion of unhoused clients. The agency provides the following services to the transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex (TGI) community:

- **Case Management:** Provides peer case management, financial assistance, and housing navigation services.
- **Street Outreach:** Engages with unhoused TGI community members, including those engaging in survival sex work, and provides harm reduction supplies, hygiene kits, and linkage to emergency shelter and gender-affirming care.
- **Workforce Development:** Offers skills-building workshops, job training, and job placement.
- **Summary of 2023 Program Outcomes**
 - The agency provided 108 linkages to shelter and housing. Additionally, 82% of this agency's clients reported increased stability and better access to social service programs due to services received from this program.

Youth Services (LA LGBT Center)

Youth Services at the LA LGBT Center are tailored to support the unique needs of LGBTQ+ young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The program provides:

- **Drop-In Center:** Provides meals, clothing, showers, and support services.
- **Education and Employment Programs:** Supports career and educational development.
- **Housing Programs:** Offers emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing.
- **Street Outreach:** Engages and assists unhoused LGBTQ+ youth with essential services and housing.

- **Summary of 2023 Program Outcomes**

- The program provided intake and assessment services to 161 new individuals (122% of goal). The Center also surpassed its goal in shelter services, assisting 44 new, unduplicated, unhoused youth (138% of goal). This resulted in 3,814 bed nights (9% above goal). The program successfully placed 21 individuals in permanent supportive housing.

Outreach Services Response

Street outreach services are proactively provided to unhoused community members daily from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., with extended outreach hours until 11:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and until 8:30 p.m. Saturdays. For agency-specific hours, please see Attachment A.

To further support those in need, drop-in services are available at the West Hollywood Library from Monday to Friday, with specific operational times available in Attachment B of this report.

In addition to proactive outreach, the homeless services providers respond to requests from the City's Homeless Concern Line 323-848-6590. The line is answered by City Human Services staff during regular business hours and communicated to the outreach teams; after-hours calls are responded to when teams are on call or as soon as possible when they return. In case of emergency, residents are asked to contact 9-1-1.

The City's homeless service providers prioritize timely responses to outreach requests; sometimes, service agencies have longer response times as they finish assisting current clients with tasks like arranging appointments with the DMV or DPSS or conducting detailed intake procedures for the Coordinated Entry System. These processes are intricate and time-consuming but vital for addressing community members' comprehensive needs.

It is important to note that building rapport with unhoused community members is a critical component of effective street outreach, and this process requires time, patience, and multiple contacts to build the necessary trust. Following this initial phase, it often takes additional contacts with an individual for them to accept services. This extended

engagement is crucial, as trust-building with unhoused populations can be challenging due to past traumas and the complexities of their situations. Thus, while outreach services are promptly offered, the actual acceptance and full engagement of individuals in these services can be a gradual process.

Homeless Services Providers and Public Safety Coordination

The City of West Hollywood's homeless service providers and public safety partners, including the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station, Los Angeles County Fire Department, and Block by Block, continue to coordinate when appropriate and to address evolving community needs. For example, service providers engage public safety partners when there is a clear risk to the safety of individuals, either unhoused or housed. Conversely, public safety partners reach out to non-profit service providers when the primary need is social service intervention, such as mental health support or housing assistance, which do not pose immediate safety or medical risks.

The City has implemented opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of the interactions between service providers and first responders. For instance, Being Alive, a City contracted social services provider, conducted a Harm Reduction/Narcan training session for the Block by Block Safety Ambassadors earlier this year. In addition, as part of the WeHo Care Team's ongoing development, the City regularly schedules meetings with first responders and Community Safety Department staff; the Care Team and City staff meet monthly with the Fire Department and Sheriff Leadership to discuss ways to enhance collaboration. In addition, the Care Team staff meets monthly with front-line first responders and rides with the Sheriff and Fire Department first responders. City staff and contracted social services staff also work with the West Hollywood Mental Health Evaluation Team/LASD to coordinate engagement for specific housed and unhoused individuals as needed.

City staff will continue to organize opportunities for informal cross-training sessions to share information with new staff at the social service agencies and newly onboarded first responders to improve service coordination and ensure all new stakeholders are aware of program developments and community needs. For both groups, improving their capacity to work effectively with unhoused populations will help enhance their responses,

ensuring interventions are compassionate, appropriate, and effective in maintaining individual dignity and community safety.

Program Impact Metrics

As part of the City’s Homeless Initiative efforts to prevent homelessness, the City provides rental assistance grants to housed community members at risk of homelessness. However, once a community member becomes homeless, the City focuses on rehousing efforts. Since 2016, the City’s contracted partners have successfully transitioned 318 formerly unhoused individuals into permanent housing, with the average number of housing placements increasing yearly. Additionally, the support extended to adults and youth through interim housing, including 472 individuals who received shelter and the necessary services to aid their transition towards stable living conditions. Substance use treatment and residential services were another critical component of the Homeless Initiative, with 463 individuals accessing these services to address their health needs and facilitate recovery. These outcomes underscore the City's comprehensive strategy to provide immediate shelter and offer long-term solutions and support for individuals experiencing homelessness.

As detailed in Table 1 below, the data showcases these service outcomes between October 2016 and September 2023.

Table 1: Summary of Program Income Metrics				
Contract Years	Service Category	Total	Annual Average	Agencies Involved
2016-23 (7 years)	Rental Assistance Grants	2,366	337	NCJW, Alliance for Housing and Healing
	Persons Housed	318	45	Ascencia, Step Up, LA LGBT Center, Healthcare in Action
	Adults in Interim Housing	242	34	Ascencia
	Youth in Interim Housing	230	33	LA LGBT Center

Contract Years	Service Category	Total	Annual Average	Agencies Involved
	Substance Use Treatment/Residential	463	66	Tarzana Treatment, Safe Refuge

Regional and Local Trends in Homelessness

The City looks to a range of data to understand changes in the number of community members experiencing homelessness in West Hollywood, including results from the annual LAHSA Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, a monthly morning count conducted by Ascencia, and the annual count of people who are housed with support from the City's contracted service providers. Due to the pandemic, LAHSA did not conduct a yearly point-in-time homeless count in 2021. The official LAHSA annual homeless count for West Hollywood in 2022 was 40. Unfortunately, due to inconsistent data, LAHSA did not release 2023 homeless count figures for individual cities in the County.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Greater LA Count by LAHSA	46,874	55,048	52,765	58,936	66,436	NA	69,144	75,500
West Hollywood Count--LAHSA	81	105	100	131	112	NA	40	NA

The Los Angeles Regional Homeless Count results tallied a crisis-level number of people without housing, peaking at 75,500 in 2023. This growth in the number of people experiencing homelessness helps explain why it is challenging to detect the impact of year-over-year housing placements by West Hollywood’s contracted partners. Even with West Hollywood’s work supporting people to exit homelessness, the regional flow into homelessness is a stronger pressure on the homeless services system. It is estimated

that an average of 207 people daily manage to exit homelessness, and approximately 227 become newly homeless.

Next Steps

Over the past five years, the Homeless Initiative has made measurable progress toward the goals outlined in the Plan. The City has launched new initiatives to help prevent and end homelessness for hundreds of people. However, there is still work to realize the goals and objectives in the Plan fully.

The West Hollywood Homeless Initiative's Five-Year Plan to Address Homelessness in our Community defines several key focus areas over the next year. First, further development of the West Hollywood Care Team to ensure continuous, year-round support to help people with behavioral health challenges remain housed and assist unhoused community members with mental health challenges by connecting them to services to help them become housed. Second, complete the Holloway Interim Housing Program development, which will provide temporary accommodations and services within City limits to persons experiencing homelessness with the goal of transitioning them into permanent supportive housing. This program is anticipated to launch by the end of 2024. Staff will also continue to pursue diverse funding opportunities to support the Initiative's efforts, work with regional agencies to stay informed of evolving best practices, and advocate for enhanced financial support to implement local solutions that benefit the West Hollywood community.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A- Homeless Outreach Hours by Agency and Day of Week

Attachment B—Schedule of Drop-In Services at West Hollywood Library

ATTACHMENT A

ATTACHMENT B

DROP-IN HOMELESS SERVICES AT WEST HOLLYWOOD LIBRARY

625 N. SAN VICENTE BLVD
2ND FLOOR
WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90069

The City of West Hollywood Homeless Initiative coordinates support for people experiencing homelessness.

This program is a collaboration between the City of West Hollywood, LA County Library and partner social service agencies.



More info at weho.org/homeless

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MON 1PM-3PM



TUES 11AM-1PM TUES 1PM-3PM



WED 1PM-3PM



THUR 11AM-1PM THUR 1PM-3PM



FRI 11AM-1PM

