Homelessness Task Force Report

Tools and Resources for Cities and Counties

LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES

California State Association of Counties

Prepared by:

INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Task Force members for their dedication to California's counties, cities and communities. This report would not have been possible without them.

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Letter from the Co-Chairs

California has seen an alarming spike in homelessness over the past decade, with a significant increase in the number of unsheltered people in our communities. Cities and counties statewide are at the forefront of responding to this crisis, providing shelter beds and behavioral health services, partnering with creative nonprofits and churches and working across silos to find creative and innovative ways to guide homeless youth, families, seniors and veterans into shelter and care.

Homelessness knows no boundaries, and local governments are developing comprehensive responses that leverage public safety, health and human services, housing, transportation, code enforcement and even parks and recreation and animal control resources to help those who are experiencing homelessness. Our members must innovate and communicate to overcome complex problems such as rapidly providing safe housing, caring for beloved pets, protecting personal and governmental property and providing access to critical health and behavioral health care services.

Recognizing that no single city or county has the resources to solve this problem on its own, our respective organizations — the League of California Cities and the California State Association of Counties — partnered in fall 2016 to create a Joint Homelessness Task Force to identify tools, resources and examples of best practices for local governments.

Experience shows that there is not just one path into homelessness; similarly, we know that there is also no single path to reducing the number of homeless and unsheltered people in our communities. Our cooperation should serve as a model for initiating conversations and collaboration at the local level.

We hope that this joint report provides the tools and resources needed for those on the ground to work across local agency "silos" and better leverage the resources of all interested parties. By learning from neighboring jurisdictions and organizations, local governments can develop comprehensive strategies to end homelessness in California.

To access this report online or submit additional resources or examples and stories, visit www.ca-ilg.org/homelessness.

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Executive Summary

After steady declines in homelessness from 2007 through 2014, the number of people without homes in California has now risen for three consecutive years. This is occurring not just in major cities and urban areas but also in rural California, in our heavily forested areas, along our rivers and in our suburban neighborhoods. Homelessness is no longer confined to our major metropolitan areas — it has spread to every part of our state.

Distressingly, the increase is due to large increases in the number of unsheltered homeless people — those who not only have no place to call home, but are not able to find even temporary shelter.

The demographics of homelessness are changing, too. Many homeless individuals struggle with substance abuse disorders and mental illness. However, domestic violence, lack of affordable housing and employment opportunities and the cost of health care have also pushed individuals into homelessness. In addition, thousands of Californians are displaced every year by natural disasters such as floods and wildfires.

California is home to 21 of the 30 most expensive rental markets in the nation and the state does not have enough affordable housing stock to meet the demand of low-income households. The state's 2.2 million extremely low-income and very low-income renter households compete for 664,000 affordable rental homes.

As national and state programs fall short of fully addressing this issue, local governments are coming together to find solutions for their communities. Collaboration, cooperation and support at the local level are key to addressing this crisis. That is why the League of California Cities and the California State Association of Counties formed the Joint Homelessness Task Force in 2016 to examine these issues and discuss collaborative local solutions to address homelessness.

Local government representatives met over the course of a year to better understand this issue in California. The task force wanted to identify not only the known best practices but also promising new practices that cities and counties are implementing to address homelessness, as well as the challenges, lessons and gaps communities are facing in the fight to end it. Details of the task force's work are outlined here.

This report provides practical tools for cities and counties in California to use in addressing homelessness in their communities. It offers details on how to create a homelessness plan, identify resources and funding for homelessness and build support in communities to address homelessness.

To successfully reduce homelessness, local governments must continue to be creative and must keep moving forward. Each city and county is unique and may be at very different stages of addressing homelessness in its community. However, to succeed in addressing an issue like homelessness, local governments must learn from each other to collaborate and forge partnerships.

We look forward to the day when every Californian has a path that leads them home.

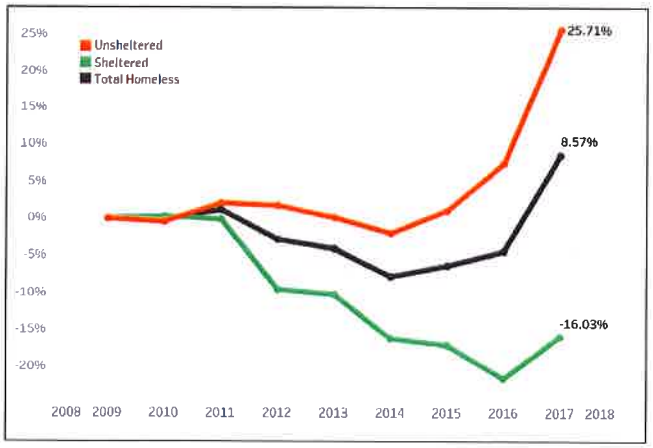
Introduction

The January 2017 point-in-time count[1] found that homelessness in California increased 13.7 percent from 2016–17, making it one of 22 states to see an increase in the number of men, women and children experiencing homelessness. Statewide, 134,278 Californians were counted as homeless; however, experts agree that the number of people without housing is three to four times higher than the point-in-time count.

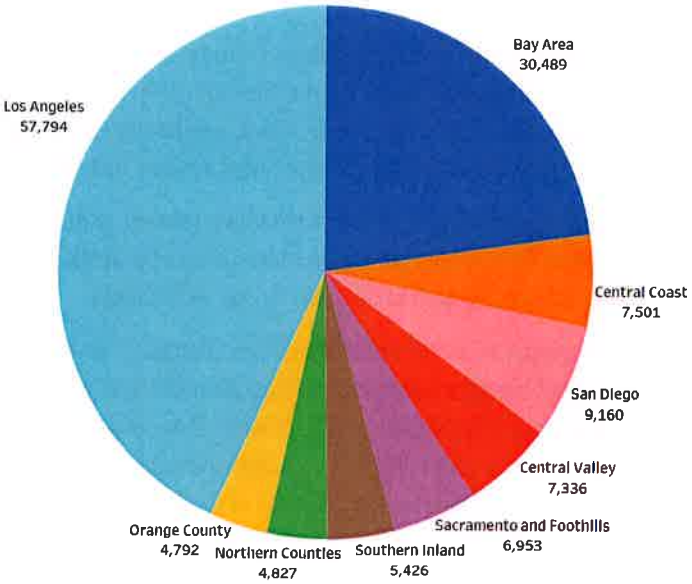
This marks a disturbing reversal of the trend from 2007–15, which had seen a 16.7 percent drop in the state's homeless population. Of those counted in 2017, 68 percent or 91,642 people were unsheltered — by far the largest homeless population in the nation.

The Los Angeles metropolitan area witnessed an increase from 2016–17, bringing its homeless population to 57,794 people. Los Angeles is not alone, however; of the nation's major cities with the largest homeless populations, three others in the top 10 are also located in California: San Diego (9,160), San Jose (7,394) and San Francisco (6,858). Rural and suburban parts of the state are equally impacted by this crisis — the largest percentage increases since 2007 have been in the far north (330 percent), El Dorado County (151 percent), Sonoma County (121 percent), Monterey and San Benito counties (115 percent), Yuba and Sutter counties (94 percent) and Placer and Nevada counties (74 percent).

Rise in Number of Unsheltered Fuels Recent Increase in Overall Homelessness



California's 134,278 Homeless by Region[1]



Many smaller cities and counties that previously had little experience with homelessness are now wrestling with how to address a problem frequently called a humanitarian crisis.

For breakdowns of homelessness trends by region, see Appendix A.

League of California Cities and California State Association of Counties Joint Homelessness Task Force

Because the burden often falls on local governments to address homelessness in their communities, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and the League of California Cities (League) formed a Joint Homelessness Task Force (Task Force) in 2016 to examine strategies local governments can implement to overcome challenges, foster best practices and share ideas and resources to address this complex issue. Task Force members include elected officials and staff from cities and counties throughout the state as well as representatives from the League and CSAC (for a full list of members, see page i).

1 *The 2017 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*, published December 2017. https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2017-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

The Task Force's mission is "to provide needed education, identify resources and develop policy that cities and counties need to prevent, assist and reduce the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in our communities." Task Force members agreed that while meeting the mission statement above, they would not let the "perfect" solution impede progress now. California is experiencing a homelessness crisis.

The Task Force spent the course of a year exploring and analyzing a variety of the best, promising and emerging practices that cities and counties are implementing statewide. It held four meetings to examine practices and results, met with experts in the field and consulted with front-line practitioners to discuss which practices worked best and did not work. Members heard from both city and county staff about implementation challenges, lessons learned and gaps and opportunities. In addition, they heard from experts on the current state of homelessness in California, including data, root causes and current resources.

Causes of Homelessness

According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, the leading causes of homelessness include lack of affordable housing, poverty (influenced by the lack of employment opportunities and the decline in public assistance), lack of affordable health care, domestic violence, mental illness and addiction.[2]

Nationally, veterans comprise 11 percent of the homeless population. In addition to the issues listed above, a large number of homeless veterans also face post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These factors are often exacerbated by a lack of family or support systems.[3]

California is home to 21 of the 30 most expensive rental markets in the nation. Not one of its counties has sufficient affordable housing stock to meet the demand of low-income households.

The cost of living is extremely high in California, and it takes the third-highest wage in the nation to afford housing, behind only Hawaii and Washington, D.C. In California, the statewide average fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment is $1,386. To afford this level of rent and utilities — without paying more than 30 percent of its income on housing — a household must earn $4,619 monthly or $55,433 annually.

The state's 2.2 million extremely low-income and very low-income renter households compete for 664,000 affordable rental homes.

In addition, homelessness is often exacerbated by addiction and mental illness. The number of psychiatric beds available statewide decreased by 30 percent between 1995 and 2010, according to the California Hospital Association.[4]

Housing is often identified as a critical and missing link in preventing recidivism in the criminal justice system. Despite the expansion of evidence-based housing practices in many communities, homelessness remains a major problem for those in the justice system and those with unmet behavioral health needs. According to some estimates, as many as 50 percent of homeless people have been incarcerated at some point. Furthermore, people in jail have experienced homelessness 7.5 to 11.3 times more than people in the general population. Other statistics show an estimated one-third of the homeless population has had an unaddressed mental health condition. Among all homeless people, an

2 http://nationalhomeless.org/about-homelessness
3 http://nchv.org/index.php/news/media/background_and_statistics
4 https://www.calhospital.org/PsychBedData

estimated 23 percent also have mental health and/or substance abuse conditions.[5]

Natural disasters and extreme weather events — like recent wildfires, floods and mudslides throughout California — displace thousands of Californians each year. Although FEMA and organizations such as the Red Cross provide immediate assistance for victims of natural disasters, individuals already living in poverty or without support systems may not be able to find new permanent housing options.

Funding

From 2005–15, federal investments in several critical housing development programs declined significantly. These include a 77 percent reduction in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Section 515 program (Rural Rental Housing Loans), a 55 percent reduction in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Section 202 program (Supportive Housing for the Elderly), a 62 percent reduction in the HOME Investment Partnerships Program and a 50 percent reduction in Community Development Block Grants. These reductions, coupled with the Great Recession and severe housing market crash in 2007–08, inhibited local governments from addressing affordable housing and in turn amplified the homelessness crisis.

At the state level, the 2012 dissolution of California's 60-year-old redevelopment program meant a loss of $1 billion annually in dedicated housing funding for cities and counties.

Over the past 15 years, three voter-approved bond measures — Prop. 46 (2002), Prop. 1C (2006) and Prop. 41 (2014) — authorized $5.6 billion in funding for affordable housing construction, including housing targeting homeless individuals and families. The vast majority of Prop. 46 and Prop. 1C funds have now been spent, however, and as of June 2016, approximately $390 million from Prop. 41 remained available.

Given these significant funding reductions, more focus has been placed on providing funding at the state and local levels. In 2016, the California Legislature created the No Place Like Home Program, and 2017 brought good news for affordable housing with the passage of several bills that could invest several billion dollars of bond funds in affordable housing and makes the first substantial commitment for ongoing funding for these purposes. These promising developments do not make up for the decrease in investments but will help move us forward.

Local governments are also using a variety of local funding sources to address homelessness. These sources include public safety funding and resources, local sales tax, animal care and regulation fees, transit or transportation assistance, development fees, transient occupancy taxes, bond proceeds and their local general funds.

5 Greenberg, G., & Rosenheck, R. (2008). *Jail incarceration, homelessness, and mental health: a national study*. Psychiatry Services, 59(2):170- 177. 3

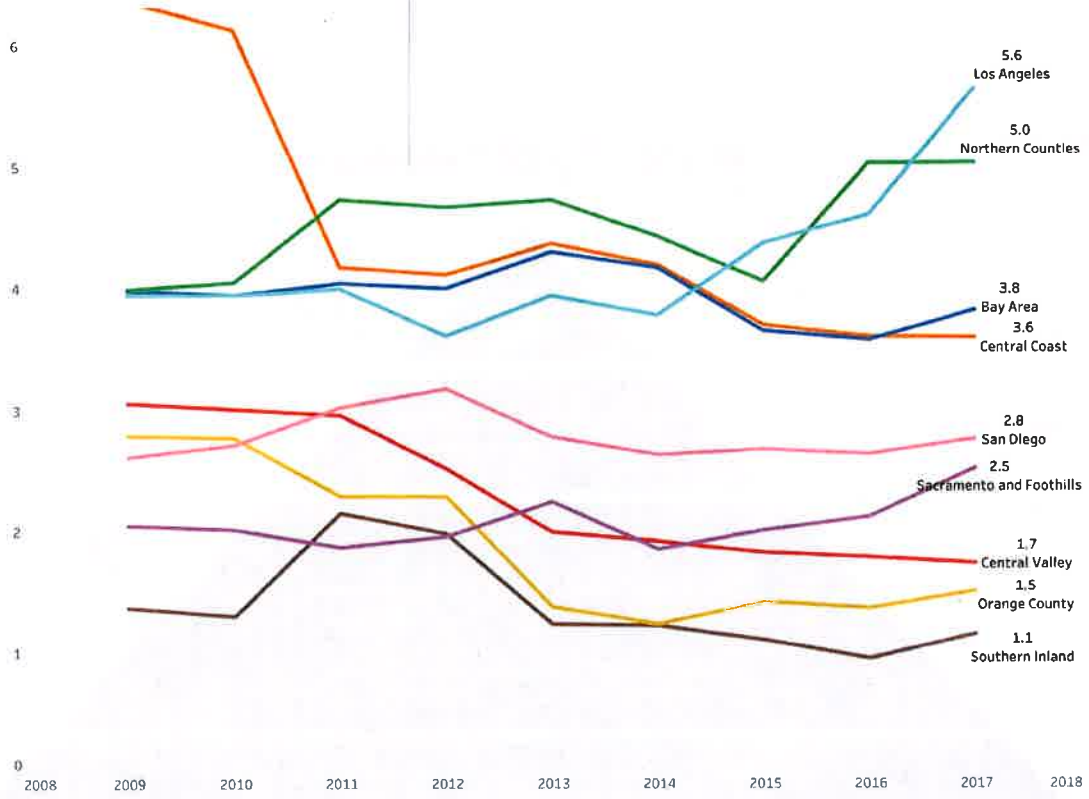
Change in Approach at the National Level

In 2009, the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act was signed into law. This act reauthorized the McKenney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act with significant amendments, including consolidating HUD's competitive grant programs, creating a Rural Housing Stability Assistance Program, changing HUD's definition of homelessness and chronic homelessness and increasing resources for prevention.[6]

In 2010, the Obama administration released *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.*[7] The plan, which was revised in 2015, established ambitious goals, including ending chronic homelessness by 2017; preventing and ending homelessness among veterans by 2015; preventing and ending homelessness for families, youth and children by 2020; and creating a path to end all types of homelessness.

The plan built on successful efforts at the local and state levels that embraced an evidence-based Housing First model, which recognizes that stable housing paired with social services greatly increase a person's chance to improve their mental and physical health, gain employment and realize other positive outcomes. This differs from traditional shelter models by welcoming all homeless individuals regardless of their circumstances, including those suffering from mental health problems and addiction. In addition to a growing track record of success, the Housing First model has shown the potential to reduce overall local costs incurred when localities provide social services to people where they are rather than allowing them to continue to cycle through emergency rooms, jails and treatment centers.

Homeless per 1,000 Residents



6 https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/hearth-act/
7 www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/USICH_OpeningDoors_Amendment2015_FINAL.pdf

Veteran homelessness fell by 47 percent nationally from 2010–16.[8] Fifty-one communities (including Riverside and cities as large as Houston, New Orleans and Philadelphia) and three states (Connecticut, Delaware and Virginia) participating in the Mayors' Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness[9] have reached their goal. This success in effectively ending veteran homelessness demonstrates that homelessness is not an intractable problem.

The emphasis on Housing First programs and success resulted in states and local governments looking to places like Utah, which has used the approach to dramatically reduce homelessness. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has also made Housing First programs, like rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing, central to its funding.

The change has not been without friction. Some shelters that have long received federal support have seen dramatic cuts, and some organizations (including faith-based organizations) have concerns about the fact that participants do not have to be sober to access services.

A number of California counties and cities have been pioneers in homeless services; even more have begun adopting the Housing First model in earnest. They have housed thousands of homeless individuals — and some are home to programs held up as national models. Yet collectively, California has failed to stem the tide of homelessness.

As the public health, environmental and public safety crisis grows, the pressure from residents and businesses on local governments to do more continues to increase.

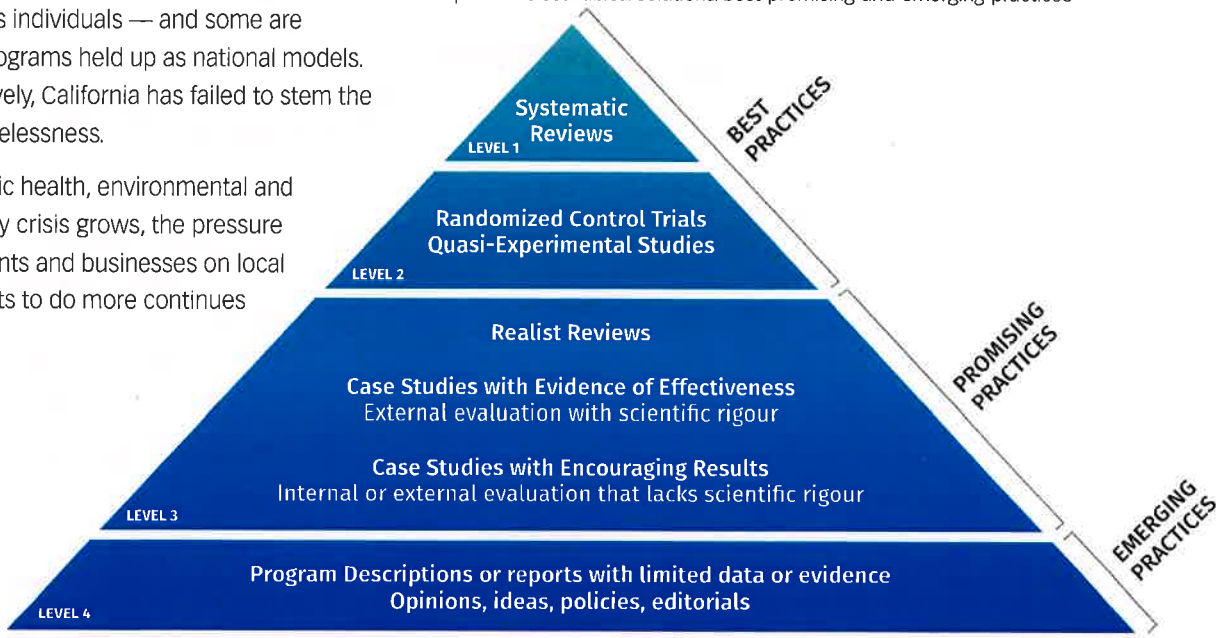
HIERARCHY OF EVIDENCE

Best, Promising and Emerging Practices

A number of efforts address homelessness, but what makes a best practice? The definition of a best practice is a solution or approach that has been proved successful through various tests and is proved effective across the board. Developing a best practice is a significant process that involves research, testing and refinement. Along the way, we may test approaches and solutions that may not be a best practice, but can be considered a "promising" or "emerging" practice. These different levels of practice refer to the Hierarchy of Evidence (shown below).
A promising practice is an effective solution or approach with sufficient evidence but that may not have enough to generalize the approach. An emerging practice refers to solutions or approaches that are new, innovative and "startup" in nature and may not have been sufficiently tested, but still hold promise and potential. These practices can warrant additional research and testing to eventually become best practices.

Hierarchy of Evidence

Source: http://homelesshub.ca/solutions/best-promising-and-emerging-practices



8 https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2016-AHAR-Part-1.pdf
9 https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/endingVetshomelessness.asp

Assessing the Cost of Homelessness

Collecting data on the extent of homelessness in California is critical to addressing the problem. This data allows cities and counties to understand the demographics and needs of their homeless populations and track the associated costs. Because there is no one-size-fits-all solution to homelessness, this data enables leaders to tailor their approach to the unique needs of their community. Local governments are collecting data about their homeless populations in a variety of ways. This section presents information on how preventative services can result in cost savings for local governments and a few examples of software and approaches that local governments statewide are using to collect data about individuals and families experiencing homelessness in order to provide better case management.

In a time when local governments are fiscally strained to provide services to their constituents, it is more important than ever to justify increased costs. Santa Clara County has developed a way to do this by quantifying future savings from actions taken today.

Created by the nonprofit organization Destination: Home and Santa Clara County, the Silicon Valley Triage Tool looks at 38 different pieces of information to calculate the probability that a homeless individual will have high ongoing costs. The identifying traits include demographics, criminal justice, medical diagnoses, health and emergency care usage, behavioral and mental health and social services indicators. The Triage Tool relies on a county database of all of the service and cost records across county departments for every resident (104,206) who has experienced episodes of homelessness over a six-year period. This offers information on services provided and costs accrued for every resident who has been homeless in the past six years. The tool helps identify high-need patients for further engagement. High need patients would be connected with an intensive case manager and enrolled in a permanent supportive housing program. The case manager will continue to monitor the individual's progress, so they can offer additional services if

needed and determine when the added support results in improved outcomes[10].

Daniel Flaming, Economic Roundtable's president, who helped to build the Triage Tool, says California's agencies already have all the information they need to create a database similar to Santa Clara County's.

Below is a summary of the types of data and costs tracked in the Silicon Valley Triage Tool:

- **Demographics** including age and gender;
- **Criminal Justice** including arrests, jail time and probation;
- **Medical Diagnoses** including chronic medical conditions and medical diagnoses;
- **Health & Emergency Services** including emergency medical services, hospital admissions and emergency room visits; and
- **Behavioral Health** including mental health inpatient and outpatient visits, substance abuse, public assistance and food stamps.

The full spreadsheet and accompanying worksheets can be found at **https://economicrt.org/publication/silicon-valley-triage-tool/.**

10 http://destinationhomescc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/SiliconValleyTriageToolFactSheetFINAL.pdf

Though these costs differ for all communities, examples of costs for a few jurisdictions below are:

- The Santa Clara County community spent $520 million annually providing services for homeless residents over six years, examined in a report by the nonprofit Economic Roundtable[11];
- The City of Sacramento spends more than $13.6 million annually to address homelessness[12]; and
- According to a report by the County Chief Executive's Office, Los Angeles County spent nearly $1 billion to care and manage about 150,000 homeless people in 2015[13].

Preventative Services and Cost Savings

Taking a proactive and coordinated approach to address homelessness can help your community in the long run. The resources and homelessness plans included in this report can be helpful when starting your community's plan.

Addressing homelessness early on and implementing preventative services and strategies can save jurisdictions resources and revenue in the long run.

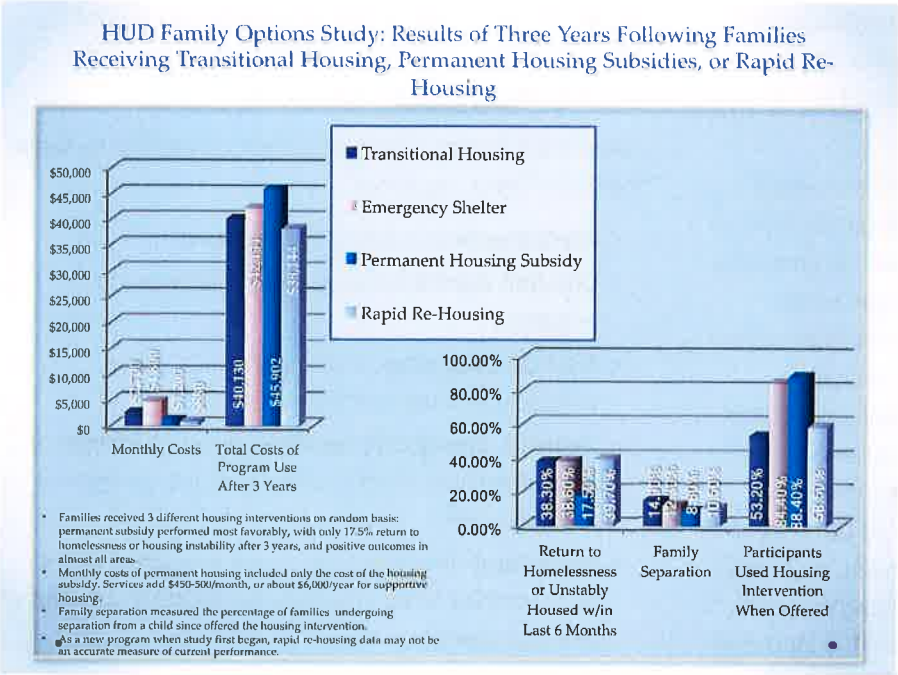
Some cities and counties have demonstrated how coordinated and specialized support to the homeless individuals at greatest risk can result in significant cost savings.

Using data from the Triage Tool, Santa Clara County estimated that it could save $19,282 per person by housing the top 1,000 most costly homeless individuals, for a total annual savings of $19,282,000[14].

A 2009 report found that in Los Angeles County, homeless General Relief recipients incurred county costs of $2,897 per month, versus $605 per month for residents of permanent supportive housing.[15]

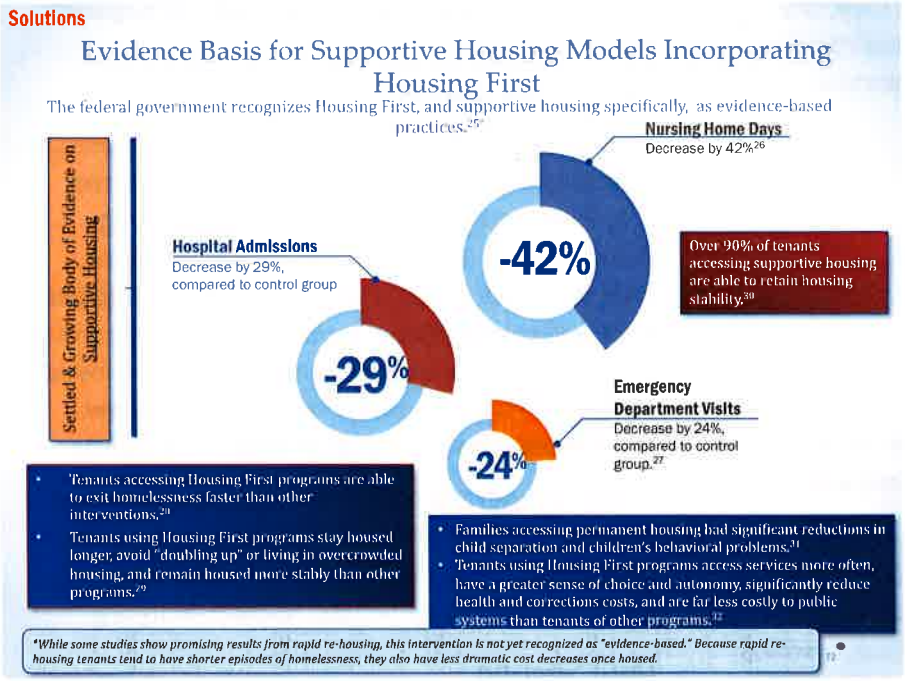
San Diego County's Project 25

San Diego County is home to the fifth-largest homeless population in the nation. Project 25, a pilot funded by United Way, was a three-year (2011–13) project designed to determine if direct coordinated services for the community's most frequent homeless service users could significantly reduce the costs of homelessness. The project was a collaborative effort coordinated by the homelessness charity St. Vincent de Paul Village in partnership with Telecare Corporation and under contract with San Diego County.



Source: https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/23-HOMEASSIST.FOR_FAMILIES.PDF

11 *Economic Roundtable: Home Not Home: The Cost of Homelessness in Silicon Valley*. Page 2.
12 City of Sacramento. Cost of Homelessness to the City. October 2015.
13 Los Angeles Chief Executive Office. *The Services Homeless Single Adults Use and their Associated Costs: An Examination of Utilization Patterns and Expenditures in Los Angeles County over One Fiscal Year*. January 2016.
14 Pre-housing cost: $53,366; post-housing costs: $37,083. http://destinationhomescc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/SiliconValleyTriageToolFactSheetFINAL.pdf
15 https://economicrt.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/Where_We_Sleep_2009.pdf



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Basu, A. et. al. "Comparative Cost Analysis of Housing & Case Management Programs for Chronically Ill Homeless Adults Compared to Usual Care," *Health Services Research*. Feb. 2012. Vol. 47, No. 1.

Sadowski, L., Kee, R., et. al. "Effect of a Housing & Case Management Program on Emergency Department Visits & Hospitalizations Among Chronically Ill Homeless Adults: A Randomized Trial." *JAMA*, 2009.

Gulcur, L., Stefancic, A., et. al. *Housing, Hospitalization, and Cost Outcomes for Homeless Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities Participating in Continuum of Care and Housing First Programs. 2003.*

Tsemberis, S. & Eisenberg, R. *Pathways to Housing: Supported Housing for Street-Dwelling Homeless Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities. 2000.*

Montgomery, A.E., Hill, L., Kane, V., & Culhane, D. *Housing Chronically Homeless Veterans: Evaluating the Efficacy of a Housing First Approach to HUD-VASH. 2013.*

Gubits, D., Shinn, M., et. al. *Family Options Study: 3-Year Impacts of Housing & Services Interventions for Homeless Families. Oct. 2016.* (Hereinafter Family Options Study.)

Tsemberis, S., Gulcur, L., et. al. *Housing First, Consumer Choice, and Harm Reduction for Homeless Individuals with a Dual Diagnosis*. 2004; Perlman, J. & Parvensky, J. Denver Housing First Collaborative: Cost Benefit Analysis and Program Outcomes Report. 2006

Project 25 identified the core homeless individuals who were the most frequent users of public services such as ambulances or emergency rooms. A total of 28 individuals (between the ages of 22–61) were analyzed as part of this project and provided intensive individualized support including permanent housing provided through the San Diego Housing Commission. Other services included health care (medical, dental and psychological), drug and alcohol treatment and education on how to manage money. This intense support was an important component of the program — some participants were visited by practitioners 4–5 times per week at the beginning of the project.

After its completion in 2013, Project 25 resulted in significant savings and reductions.

- The 28 participants in the project used a total of approximately $3.5 million in expenses from all public services in the base year of 2010. In 2013, the expenses dropped to $1.1 million, resulting in a reduction of 67 percent in total costs.
- The net return on dollars spent for Project 25 was 207 percent in 2012 and 262 percent in 2013[16].

Data Collection

Homeless Management Information Systems

Cost and savings estimates are only as good as the data used to calculate them. Continuums of Care are required by HUD to have a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in place. HMIS are local information technology systems used to collect data on homeless individuals and families and those receiving services.[17]

16 Fermanian Business & Economic Institute at Point Loma Nazarene University. *Project 25: Housing the Most Frequent Users of Public Services among the Homelessness*. Page 9.

17 **https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hmis/**

While some communities use tools such as Excel, GPS coordinates and Google Earth to track and maintain data on their homeless populations, software options are also available, including:

- Clarity
- Client Services Network/CSN
- Eccovia Solutions – Client Track
- Enginuity
- ServicePoint
- Social Solutions

Please note that the Task Force did not have the opportunity to review software and the listing is not an endorsement, but is offered as general information.

San Diego's HMIS is the data collection tool used by the majority of homeless-dedicated service providers in San Diego County. Over 60 agencies, 250 homeless-dedicated projects and 450 HMIS users enter homeless service data into the HMIS on an ongoing basis. The Homeless System Framework tracks entry into the system, those served and exit destination type (permanent housing, temporary housing, etc.). The tool allows the user to sort by reporting period, project type and project location. The Framework and HMIS can be accessed here: **https://public.tableau.com/profile/regional.task.force.for.the.homeless#!/vizhome/SystemFramework-AllClients-8_4_17/System_Framework_Story**.

Alameda County implemented its HMIS system in 2005. Called InHOUSE (Information about Homelessness, Outcomes, and Service Engagement), the system is supported by a coalition of Alameda County Housing and Community Development and the 14 cities within the county, nonprofit organizations and funders as well as other county departments that provide services to those who are homeless or at risk for becoming homeless. The database includes over 54,000 client records, with over 45 agencies involved in the data collection and more than 300 programs receiving homeless funding. To find out more visit **www.acgov.org/cda/hcd/hmis/index.htm.**

HCD offers guides and tools for Continuums of Care to help with the development of HMIS Systems. Those guides can be found at **www.hudexchange.info/hmis/guides/#coc-resources**.

Collection Methods

Some government agencies have contracted with research firms to collect and analyze data. For example, a number of counties including Santa Cruz, Sonoma, San Benito, Monterey, Marin, Solano and Santa Clara as well as the cities of San José and San Francisco worked with **Applied Survey Research (ASR)**, a social research firm, to conduct point-in-time counts and assess the needs of the homeless population in each jurisdiction. Find out more at **www.appliedsurveyresearch.org/homelessness-reports.**

Through its open data portal, the City of Santa Rosa tracks homeless encampments, service calls and homelessness related police and fire incidents within the city limits. Access Citizen Connect at **http://citizenconnect.srcity.org**.

Data Sharing

One of the challenges pertaining to data is the sharing of the data once it is collected. Concerns about individual privacy has led to laws and regulations that make it very difficult for departments and agencies to share the information they have in a meaningful way. However, there is possible change on the horizon in this area.

AB 210 (Santiago, Chapter 544, Statutes of 2017) sponsored by Los Angeles County and recently signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown, authorizes "counties to establish a homeless adult and family multidisciplinary personnel team with the goal of facilitating the expedited identification, assessment and linkage of homeless individuals to housing and supportive services within that county and to allow provider agencies to share confidential information for the purpose of coordinating housing and supportive services to ensure continuity of care. The bill requires the sharing of information permitted under these provisions to be governed by protocols developed in each county, as specified, and would require each county to provide a copy of its protocols to the State Department of Social Services".[18] The bill encourages counties to establish data-sharing among departments and may help both counties and cities collaborate and share data in a confidential manner.

18 https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB210

Funding Options

As a city or county is deciding on the best course of action to address homelessness in its community, the question of how to pay for the action will undoubtedly arise. This section focuses on how cities and counties fund these activities through:

- Federal funding sources;
- State funding sources; and
- Local funding activities.

Federal and State Funding Sources

Both the state and federal governments offer multiple funding sources that cities and counties can use to address homelessness in their jurisdictions. The table in this section highlights the funding sources most used by California local governments and an indication of the targeted population and service type, if applicable.

Though cities and counties may not be eligible recipients for every funding source in this table, knowing what is available is important as you collaborate with other community partners. In addition, city and county leadership often have opportunities to encourage participation in underutilized programs, such as school meal programs.

ITEM	FUNDING SOURCE	ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS
Shelters and Prevention	**Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG):** ESG is a HUD program grant administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). ESG provides funding to help improve the quality of existing emergency shelters for the homeless, make additional shelters available, meet the costs of operating shelters and help prevent homelessness. The program also provides short-term homelessness prevention assistance to persons at imminent risk of losing their housing due to eviction, foreclosure or utility shutoffs. The State of California runs an **Emergency Solutions Grant Program**.	Metropolitan cities, urban counties, territories and state
Housing	**HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME):** HOME is a HUD program that provides formula grants to states and units of local government used by communities – often in partnership with local nonprofit groups – to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people.	State and local and communities, including cities and counties
Housing **Case Management**	**HUD Continuum of Care Program:** This program is designed to promote communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers and state and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families and communities by homelessness; promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.	State and local governments, nonprofit organizations
Housing	**Community Development Block Grants (CDBG):** CDBG is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. Among these needs is housing.	Counties with fewer than 200,000 residents in unincorporated areas and cities with fewer than 50,000 residents that do not participate in the U.S. (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement program

ITEM	FUNDING SOURCE	ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS
Housing, Families, Seniors and Disabilities	**Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers:** This housing program targets low-income families, seniors and those with disabilities by providing a direct housing subsidy to landlords, with the enrollee paying any difference in cost.	Local public housing agencies
Veterans **Case Management** **Housing**	**HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers:** This program combines Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance with case management and clinical services provided by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA).	Local public housing agencies
Veterans, Families and Prevention	**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF):** This nationwide program is intended primarily to serve individuals experiencing crisis homelessness. It provides temporary financial assistance and a range of other flexible services geared toward preventing homelessness among those at risk and rapidly stabilizing in permanent housing those who do become homeless. It is important to note that, despite its name, the program serves both families with children and individual veterans.	Private nonprofit organizations and consumer cooperatives who can provide supportive services to eligible populations
Veterans Prevention Housing	**Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program (VHHP):** The purpose of VHHP is the acquisition, construction, rehabilitation and preservation of affordable multifamily housing for veterans and their families to allow veterans to access and maintain housing stability.	Sponsors and borrowing entities may be organized on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis. Any public agency or private entity capable of entering into a contract is eligible to apply.
Behavioral Health	**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Grants:** These are federal block grant funds available through the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment and the Center for Mental Health Services to support local programs for substance use disorders and mental illness.	County mental health plans
Behavioral Health **Housing**	**No Place Like Home:** Dedicates $2 billion in bond proceeds to invest in the development of permanent supportive housing for persons who are in need of mental health services and are experiencing homelessness, chronic homelessness or who are at risk for chronic homelessness. The bonds are repaid by funding from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). Key features of the program include: • Funding for permanent supportive housing must utilize low-barrier tenant selection practices that prioritize vulnerable populations and offer flexible, voluntary and individualized supportive services. • Counties must commit to providing mental health services and helping coordinate access to other community-based supportive services. Applications for NPLH technical assistance (TA) were due on Sep. 30, 2017. Counties that applied should be seeing the funds soon. Funds will be awarded in the form of a grant as follows: • $150,000 to LA County and large counties (population over 750,000); • $100,000 to medium counties (population between 200,000 and 750,000); and • $75,000 to small counties (population under 200,000). The funds cover costs associated with planning, design and implementation of NPLH projects, which includes eligible costs such as: • Assistance in applying for NPLH funds; • Assistance in implementing NPLH activities (developing permanent supportive housing that uses Housing First principles for target population); • Coordinating funded activities with local homelessness systems, such as Coordinated Entry Systems; • Collecting data, data sharing among multiple systems, program evaluation and implementing regulatory and homelessness systems; and • Planning for delivering support services to tenants.	Counties (either solely or with a housing development sponsor)

ITEM	FUNDING SOURCE	ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS

Behavioral Health
 	
Housing *continued*
	Counties can provide TA activities directly or subcontract for them. Some examples of activities NPLH TA grants can fund include those that:
	• Promote evidence-based service delivery, including soliciting consumer feedback;
	• Develop or implement community acceptance strategies;
	• Hire staff or consultants to:
	  • Identify potential sites;
	  • Develop a process to identify potential developers or development sponsors;
	  • Monitor activities of developers or development sponsors to ensure adherence to NPLH requirements;
	  • Broker relationships and coordinating activities among parties involved in providing housing and/or services to members of the target population including the county, affordable housing developers/housing authorities, service providers and local Coordinated Entry Systems; and
	  • Identify and apply for additional resources for capital, supportive services and operating costs.
	• Coordinate and communicate with other county and community providers to increase understanding of intersecting/overlapping needs of shared clientele;
	• Coordinate and communicate with HCD, DHCS and other state agencies to support learning, identification of additional training and other TA needs, and regional collaboration;
	• Implement other capacity-building activities related to creating housing models; and
	• Develop or update a county homelessness plan.
		Counties (either solely or with a housing development sponsor)

Health	**Medicaid/Medi-Cal:** Medi-Cal is California's Medicaid program. Medi-Cal is a public health insurance program financed by the state and federal governments that provides health care services for low-income individuals, including: • Families with children; • Seniors; • Persons with disabilities; • Foster youth; • Pregnant women; and • Low-income people with specific diseases such as tuberculosis, breast cancer or HIV/AIDS. In California, counties have a unique perspective on the Medi-Cal program. County welfare departments determine eligibility for the Medi-Cal program, and county behavioral health departments act as the health plan provider for Medi-Cal. California counties do not, however, have a share of cost for the Medi-Cal program. Counties can leverage their unique position within the Medi-Cal program to conduct outreach to help eligible homeless individuals receive Medi-Cal services.	California Department of Health Care Services (administered by counties in California)
Families Prevention Employment	**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/CalWORKs:** Operated by local county welfare departments, CalWORKs provides families in need with a combination of financial assistance and work opportunities to help them become more financially independent.	State and tribal agencies (administered by counties in California)

ITEM	FUNDING SOURCE	ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS
Families Food	**CalFRESH:** CalFRESH, formerly known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), is a federally mandated, state-supervised, and county-operated government program that provides monthly food benefits to help low-income households purchase the food they need to maintain adequate nutritional levels. While CalFresh benefits generally cannot be used to purchase hot or prepared food, the **CalFresh Restaurant Meals Program** allows homeless, disabled and adults age 60 and older to use their Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) at select restaurants in some counties. Some individuals also qualify for SNAP employment and training benefits.	State and tribal agencies (administered by counties in California)
Families	**Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF):** Funded through Title IV-B funding, PSSF is a program to develop a coordinated and integrated service system that builds on the strengths of families and communities.	Child welfare agencies and eligible Indian tribes
Families, Housing and Case Management	**CalWORKs Housing Support Program:** This program targets CalWORKS homeless families or those at risk for homelessness. Major components include housing identification, rent and moving assistance, and case management and services.	Counties
Seniors and Housing	**Section 202: Supportive Housing for Elderly:** This program provides grants for supportive housing for the elderly who are very low-income and at least 62 years old.	Private nonprofit organizations and nonprofit consumer cooperatives
Youth	**McKinney-Vento grants:** The State of California receives a limited amount of federal funding to support efforts to address the needs of homeless students, which is sub-granted to local education agencies (LEAs) such as school districts and can support collaborative projects. Each school district is required to have a McKinney-Vento liaison. LEAs are also mandated to comply with objectives outlined in the **State of California's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, www.cde.ca.gov/re/es/.**	Local education agencies
Youth	**Local Control Funding Formula/Local Control Accountability Plans (LCFF/LCAP):** The State of California's funding formula for local school districts to meet outlined objectives, particularly related to priority populations (i.e., English-language learners, foster youth and low-income youth) must now also specifically address the needs of homeless students. LCAPs are developed by school districts but may present opportunities for collaboration. Some school districts combine their objectives to serve homeless students with those designed to serve foster youth. LCAPs are available on school district websites.	School districts
Youth and Food	**CalFresh:** Homeless youth not living with parents/guardians or "under parental control" may be eligible for CalFresh benefits. There is no age requirement to apply for benefits, no need to supply a permanent address, and a school identification card is sufficient for identification requirements.	Individuals
Youth and Food	**USDA school nutrition programs:** These programs include school breakfast, school lunch, summer meals and after-school meal programs and provide free meals to students with income below the federal poverty level. Homeless students may be easily enrolled into the school lunch and breakfast programs through McKinney-Vento liaisons. In areas with significant numbers of homeless students and challenges getting to school, cities and counties can encourage school districts to implement or expand Breakfast in the Classroom or other Second Chance Breakfast programs. Summer meal and after-school meal programs are drop-in programs that present opportunities to avoid any stigma associated with accessing school meal programs. These programs also provide jobs to community members. Many high-poverty schools are eligible to participate in the **Community Eligibility Provision, www.frac.org/community-eligibility,** which enables schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students without requiring household applications.	Individuals

ITEM	FUNDING SOURCE	ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS
Youth	**Homeless Youth and Exploitation Program:** This program, administered by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, addresses the various needs of homeless youth including housing, outreach, signing up for available public benefits, employment training and educational support.	Nonprofit organizations
Law Enforcement **Behavioral Health** **Housing**	**Proposition 47 (Year):** Prop. 47 was a voter-approved initiative to enact the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act that is administered by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC). The act includes a grant program aimed at supporting mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment and diversion programs for people in the criminal justice system, with an emphasis on programs that reduce recidivism of people convicted of less serious crimes.	Local public agencies
Law Enforce-ment **Prevention** **Housing** **Behavioral Health**	**Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) Grant:** This $15 million grant, administered by BSCC, allows law enforcement officers to redirect people suspected of committing low-level offenses to community-based services rather than to jail, addressing underlying factors that drive criminal justice contact. The program focuses on providing substance use and mental health treatment and housing.	Cities and counties
Law Enforcement	**AB 109 Funding:** Police officers may often serve as an initial point of contact with homeless individuals and families. Law enforcement agencies are implementing many new tools to help reduce incarceration of homeless individuals and connect them to services. Counties have used their AB 109 public safety realignment funding to help provide temporary and transitional housing for AB 109 offenders and individuals involved in the local criminal justice system. This typically is part of a comprehensive case management plan for the offender.	Counties
Case Management	**Medi-Cal Whole Person Care Pilots:** In 2016, Medi-Cal began funding 25 Whole Person Care Pilots designed to improve coordination of health, behavioral health and social services at the local level. The Whole Person Care Pilots are being conducted as part of the Medi-Cal 2020 Waiver, which will allow participating counties and the City of Sacramento to coordinate health, behavioral health and social services in a patient-centered manner aiming to improve beneficiary health and well-being through a more effective and efficient use of resources. The pilots will work toward supporting the integration of care for a vulnerable group of Medi-Cal beneficiaries — who have been identified as high-frequency users of multiple systems and continue to have poor health outcomes — with the goal of providing comprehensive coordinated care for the beneficiary, leading to better health outcomes. Some counties view these pilots as a way to help more homeless individuals achieve better health outcomes.	Counties and one city

In addition to the sources outlined here, additional state funding is on the horizon. In 2017, the Legislature passed and Gov. Jerry Brown signed SB 2 (Atkins, Chapter 364, statutes of 2017) and SB 3 (Beall, Chapter 365, Statutes of 2017), which both have the potential to provide additional housing to persons experiencing or at risk for homelessness. While details on these funding sources are still emerging, cities and counties should begin to think about how they will invest this new funding in their jurisdictions.

SB 2 establishes a permanent source of funding for affordable housing. Fifty percent of the first year of funding is allocated to the California Housing and Community Development Department to assist persons experiencing or at risk for homelessness. After the first year, 70 percent of funding will be allocated to local governments for a variety of uses including development of affordable housing, matching funds for programs with similar goals and assisting persons experiencing or at risk for homelessness.

SB 3 places a $4 billion affordable housing and veterans housing bond on the statewide ballot in November 2018. Cities and counties are eligible to apply for various programs valued at $2.85 billion, including the Multifamily Housing Program, Infill Infrastructure Grant Program, Joe Serna Jr. Farmworker Housing Fund, Local Housing Trust Fund Matching Grant Program, CalHome/Self Help Housing and Transit Oriented Development Implementation Fund.

Local Funding Sources

In addition to federal and state funding sources, cities and counties are using local funds for homelessness response, programs and services. A survey of the League and CSAC indicated that local governments are using local funds from the following sources:

- Public safety funding and resources;
- Local sales and use tax;
- Animal care and regulation fees;
- Transit or transportation assistance;
- Development fees;
- Transient occupancy taxes;
- Bond proceeds; and
- General Fund.

Because local funding is not always earmarked directly for homelessness programs, it has been difficult to estimate exactly how much local governments are contributing; however, that is changing. Recently, cities and counties have begun tracking the costs of homelessness in their communities (see more on this in the Assessing the Cost of Homelessness section on page 7). In addition, several jurisdictions have passed voter-approved local initiatives that provide direct funding for homelessness programs.

Marin County Landlord Partnership Program

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) is a huge investment of federal funds into Marin County. Previously, some people in Marin with vouchers could not use them. Landlords were hesitant to accept vouchers due to a perception that voucher holders were bad tenants and would damage units. The Marin Housing Authority knew that the clear majority of voucher holders were good, hard-working tenants. The Landlord Partnership was established to incentivize landlords to accept vouchers. As a result, the community overcame the negative perceptions about voucher holders, and more landlords began accepting vouchers.

LOCAL INITIATIVES
to Combat Homelessness

Since 2016, at least three local jurisdictions have passed voter-approved initiatives that provide direct funding to reduce homelessness.

- **City of Los Angeles:** As part of the city's three-pillared approach to reduce homelessness, voters in the City of Los Angeles passed Proposition HHH (November 2016), a $1.2 billion general obligation bond measure expected to build 10,000 units of permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness or at risk for becoming homeless. Bonds will be repaid through an increase in property taxes. The measure passed with 76 percent of voter support, well beyond the two-thirds support needed to pass. To build support for this ambitious approach, the city first developed homelessness strategies — with community input that includes a focus on housing, prevention and street outreach. For more information, visit **www.lamayor.org/homelessness**.
- **Los Angeles County:** Voters in Los Angeles County approved Measure H (March 2017), a one-quarter cent sales tax increase to fund measures to prevent and combat homelessness. The local measure is expected to raise about $355 million per year over ten years that will be used for subsidized housing, coordinated outreach and shelters, case management and services, homelessness prevention and services to increase income. The initial allocation of revenues from Measure H was developed by a panel of 50 people appointed from county government, cities, local nonprofit and faith organizations and approved by the board of supervisors. The measure passed with 69 percent of the vote. For more information, visit **www.homeless.lacounty.gov**.
- **Santa Clara County:** In November 2016, voters in Santa Clara County approved Measure A, a $950 million bond measure to fund housing for homeless, low- and moderate-income residents and first-time homebuyers. The bond will be repaid with an increase in property taxes. The measure passed with 68 percent of voter support. For more information, visit **destinationhomescc.org**.

The incentives for landlords to accept housing choice vouchers are:

- Up to $2,500 for a security deposit;
- Loss mitigation up to $3,500;
- Up to one month of rent to a property owner while repairing excessive damage;
- Waiver of building permit fees; and
- A 24-hour hotline for landlords to call with immediate issues.

The Landlord Partnership Program is exceeding its initial goals. As of late 2017, the program has an additional 71 landlords accepting Section 8 vouchers. Significant goodwill has also been built with the landlords.

Marin County entered into a contract in 2016 with the Marin Housing Authority in the amount of $404,000 to fund the program. Federal funds can be tapped to offer property owners renting more than half of their units to voucher-holders interest-free loans of up to $25,000 for rehabilitation or repair of their units. Marin Housing Authority set up and administers the partnership.

Streamlined Temporary and Incidental Shelter Program in San José

To address the homeless crisis, the City of San José adopted a new ordinance in August 2017 that created a streamlined process to allow temporary and incidental shelters without the requirement of an approved development permit. To be approved, the shelter must be registered with the city Housing Department and meet specific performance standards and other requirements.

The program defines an incidental shelter use as: a shelter use incidental to the primary assembly use on the site if the usage occupies less than 50 percent of the usable square footage of the building(s) that are primarily dedicated to assembly use on the parcel. The maximum occupancy is 50 persons or as set forth by the Fire Code, whichever is more restrictive. A primary assembly use includes but is not limited to all religious assemblies and other places such as gymnasiums, libraries, movie theaters, nightclubs, schools and community centers.

LA County Landlord Incentives

Federal housing subsidies play a critical role in combatting homelessness. However, the very low vacancy rate in Los Angeles County's rental housing market makes it difficult for families and individuals with federal subsidies to secure housing. To address this problem, Los Angeles County's Homeless Incentive Program (HIP) actively recruits landlords to rent to homeless families/adults with a federal housing subsidy who need permanent supportive housing by offering the following incentives:

- **Vacancy payments:** provide landlords with payments to hold a rental unit for one to two months after a tenant with a subsidy has been accepted by the landlord and while the landlord is going through the HUD approval process.
- **Move-In assistance:** provides homeless families and individuals with a listing of available units, transportation to visit units, preparation for the rental process and financial assistance to cover the security deposit, utilities and other move-in costs.
- **Tenant assistance with credit checks and rental application fees:** provides funding directly to the property owner to cover the cost of credit checks and application fees.
- **Damage claims:** provides financial assistance to landlords to mitigate damage caused by tenants during their occupancy under the voucher programs.

The Housing Authority of Los Angeles County (HACoLA) administers the HIP throughout the county by working with other public housing authorities (PHAs). Through these partnerships, local PHAs establish their own HIP with county funding administered by HACoLA.

The HIP is funded by Measure H, a quarter-cent tax for 10 years that will raise approximately $355 million annually to combat and prevent homelessness.

Existing and Emerging Approaches

Jurisdictions statewide are prioritizing homelessness in their communities because the benefits of addressing this problem will help improve the overall health of their communities. Fortunately, cities and counties can use a number of existing resources, services and programs to address this complex problem. The list below provides a starting point to think about what could work in your community — but each city and county is unique, and therefore individual approaches should be based on the community's unique needs and resources.

Housing

Lack of affordable housing options is a leading cause of homelessness. California has an estimated affordable housing shortage of more than 1 million units[19].

- ***Rapid Rehousing:*** This approach provides temporary housing assistance to homeless individuals. The model entails prioritizing the quick relocation of homeless populations into temporary housing and then providing other support, such as mental and social services.
- ***Continuum of Care (CoC):*** CoCs are designed to promote communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness. They provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers and state and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families and communities by homelessness. Typically, CoCs are local planning bodies that coordinate homelessness services for specific geographic areas.
- ***Tiny homes:*** Tiny homes have gained in popularity as a lower-cost alternative to traditional single-family housing construction. Tiny homes have also served as transitional housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. A tiny home is a small structure of between 60 and 400 square feet that supports a minimalist lifestyle. Depending on funding, a tiny house can range from a simple room with a bed to something more robust with a compostable toilet, kitchenette, loft and front porch. For the purposes of housing those experiencing homelessness, these units are not necessarily meant to be fully contained dwellings, but rather sleeping units intended to replace other substandard sleeping arrangements. Building small communities of tiny homes to be used as transitional housing embraces the established Housing First model. Tiny homes are sustainable and less expensive to build and do not require extensive expertise, allowing volunteers of many backgrounds and skill levels to help with construction. Moreover, the simple materials required can be donated by local stores and community members. Depending on funding, donations and resources, a tiny home village could contain showering and laundry facilities and essential wraparound services. Tiny homes and villages are not without controversy and can face local barriers to construction. One primary barrier is local zoning laws that prevent the construction of structures as small as tiny houses. Finding a place to locate a tiny home village can also be difficult in some areas due to limited space and concerns from nearby residents over transitional housing.

19 http://www.hcd.ca.gov/policy-research/plans-reports/docs/California percent27s-Housing-Future-Full-Public-Draft.pdf

Rapid Rehousing — Bridge to Housing

BEST PRACTICE

Yolo County, the City of West Sacramento and Yolo County Housing collaborated on a pilot project in 2014 to relocate an entire homeless encampment on a West Sacramento riverbank. The project relocated the encampment to a single motel where participants were offered temporary housing, case management and services.

Spearheaded by the West Sacramento Police Department, the pilot project featured a highly collaborative and comprehensive planning process involving multiple stakeholders. The planning group, composed of public, private and nonprofit entities, met over the course of two months to develop the best strategy for relocating the homeless encampment. After the planning process, the pilot included three assessments to gain a better understanding of the needs and challenges of the homeless population living in the encampment. Coordinated outreach was also conducted to build relationships with the population.

The program placed an emphasis on providing frequent and consistent on-site services. Through four months of temporary housing and intensive case management, participants were able to stabilize their lives, address health issues and secure a housing voucher. Other services provided on-site included daily lunches, haircuts, mental health services and harm reduction classes. Of the 53 participants who completed the program, 42 remained engaged in services with case managers 12 months after exiting the program. Furthermore, 68 percent of participants were able to secure permanent housing.

The overall cost of the project was $152,238 — $6,000 less than expected. It was funded primarily by the City of West Sacramento and Yolo County (the rest of the cost was covered by donations).

Temporary Emergency Shelter Units — 14Forward

EMERGING PRACTICE

In 2016, Yuba County collaborated with local nonprofits, faith-based organizations and the private sector to launch a temporary shelter community for its local homeless population. Faced with the problem of several encampments along surrounding rivers, the county created a 20-unit tiny village of Tuff Sheds to relocate some of the homeless population. The Tuff Sheds are 12 by 8 foot shelters with beds, windows and insulation. They do not have electricity or running water, but there are lavatories on-site as well as a nearby homelessness center that offers meals and showers.

After a plan was fully formulated, the village was developed in about two months and officially opened in July 2016. Meant to function as temporary shelter, the goal of the village is to provide individuals with shelter for 30 days and with supportive resources to help move tenants into more permanent housing. Since its opening, the on-site case managers have helped over 100 people, coordinated nearly 900 service referrals and transitioned over 45 percent of people exiting the program to a permanent destination.

The village was funded through county temporary relocation funds collected from countywide code enforcement activities, a small amount of general funds and financial and in-kind donations.

Tiny Homes —Fresno Poverello House

EMERGING PRACTICE

Launched in 2004, the Poverello House — a homeless shelter in Fresno — created the Village of Hope and, in 2007, expanded it to include the Community of Hope to meet an increasing demand for homeless shelters. The villages consist of tiny homes or Tuff Sheds that accommodate about 124 clients every night. Homeless individuals staying in the villages have access to services such as education, substance abuse counseling and life-skills training coordinated by a client services coordinator.

With a motto of "take care of yourself, take care of others, and take care of this place," the overnight clients are expected to provide their own security and clean up after themselves. The simple shelter provides secure and temporary housing for individuals to make the transition into permanent housing.

Veterans

"Homeless veterans" refers to those who have served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States. In 2016, California had a total of 9,612 homeless veterans. This equates to one in four veterans.[20] A number of funding programs are available to cities and counties to combat veteran homelessness. See the Funding Options section on page 11 for more information.

Housing Assistance for Veterans — Housing Our Heroes

BEST PRACTICE

In 2016, the City of San Diego and the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) partnered to launch the Housing our Heroes initiative and committed to getting 1,000 homeless veterans off the streets and into shelters or housing. This initiative is part of *Housing First — San Diego*, the SDHC's three-year Homelessness Action Plan launched in 2014.

The initiative involves a $12.5 million investment (from federal, city and SDHC resources) to provide housing opportunities for homeless veterans through coordinated efforts with landlords, financial assistance and supportive services. The program comprises four key components.

- ***Landlord Outreach:*** Incentives are provided to landlords to encourage more of them to rent units to homeless veterans. Specific incentives include a monetary payment for each unit that is rented to veterans.
- ***Rapid Re-housing Assistance:*** This component will help homeless veterans and families who may become homeless due to unforeseen circumstances. Funds can cover up-front move-in costs and, at times, rental assistance.
- ***SDHC Federal VASH Vouchers:*** Vouchers will be available to assist chronically homeless veterans that have both a disability and honorable discharge with rental assistance and supportive health services.

- ***SDHC Federal Housing Vouchers with Supportive Services:*** These vouchers will be available to homeless veterans that are not eligible for the Federal VASH vouchers.

Over a two-year period, funds will be allocated to these four components to help the City of San Diego provide housing for up to 1,000 homeless military veterans. Since 2016, the initiative had more than 700 homeless veterans enrolled in the program.

The initiative is funded by a combination of federal resources (VASH vouchers), city general funds and SDHC funds.

Health and Social Services

Homelessness is closely linked to factors related to health, behavioral health and social services. In many cases, untreated health issues can lead to homelessness. According to HUD, those living in homeless shelters are "twice as likely have a disability compared to the general population"[21].

- ***Whole Person Care (WPC):*** The WPC model is an integrated and coordinated approach between health, behavioral health and social services agencies to provide efficient and effective resources to Medi-Cal recipients who are frequent users of the health care system. The model addresses the full spectrum of a person's needs, such as health, behavioral and socioeconomic challenges. Many of the pilot programs are targeting high utilizers, residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and people with mental health or substance use disorders.

20 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. *The 2016 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*. Page 54.
21 National Alliance to End Homelessness: https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/what-causes-homelessness/health/

- ***Safe Havens:*** Private or semi-private long-term housing for people with severe mental illness and are limited to a small number of people within a facility.
- ***Homeless Outreach Teams:*** Homeless Outreach Teams provide outreach to and engage with the homeless population to connect them with services all focused on the goal of getting the client housed.

Whole Person Care — Alameda County Care Connect (AC3)

PROMISING PRACTICE

The California Department of Health Care Services (HCS) in 2016 awarded the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency (HCSA) $140 million to implement a whole person care pilot program. The goal of the AC3 pilot is to build infrastructure that will improve integration, reduce unnecessary utilization of health care services and improve health outcomes for homeless individuals and other "high utilizers" of health care services.

With the understanding that individuals often need coordinated services across several departments and sectors, the AC3 vision is to create an integrated system across multiple systems that helps high-need patients achieve optimal independence and health in safe and stable housing. AC3 includes six critical components: 1) strengthening of care coordination by including comprehensive social resources into a person's care plan; 2) improving and facilitating care integration between primary care providers, mental health providers, substance use programs and family supports; 3) data sharing between partners in the form of a community health record; 4) housing and homelessness, focusing on fully implementing the Housing Resource Centers and Coordinated Entry; 5) BH Crisis Response System focusing on decreasing the revolving door to acute psychiatric care; and 6) improving the consumer and family experience.

The funding for AC3 comes from federal dollars through an 1115 waiver or a Medi-Cal 2020. These waivers enable states to negotiate how Medicaid dollars are spent to allow flexibility with programs. The grant also requires a 50 percent match.

Marin County Homeless Outreach Teams

In response to persistent high visibility people on the street who were also high utilizers of expensive services, the community began piloting a new approach called HOT (Homeless Outreach Team). Marin County created its version of HOT based on what was being done successfully in San Mateo.

The HOT process in Marin County involved these steps:

1. Creating a HOT list of the most challenging and hard-to-serve individuals in downtown. The team consulted the Fire Department, Police Department and downtown outreach workers to identify the chronically homeless. Outreach workers from the San Rafael Police Department and Community Action Marin engage candidates to build trust. After a person grants permission, they are added to the HOT list.
2. Bringing together every provider of services to the chronically homeless. This included St. Vincent's, Ritter Center, the City of San Rafael, Marin County Health and Human Services, County Mental Health, Probation, Marin Housing Authority, the District Attorney's Office, Community Action Marin and Homeward Bound.
3. Creating and implementing a customized housing plan for each person on the HOT list. Each provider is accountable for completing action items to move a person on the list toward housing. At biweekly meetings, each provider reports on what it accomplished since the previous meeting. The goal is to place someone as quickly as possible in permanent housing appropriate for their needs.
4. Making sure front-line and senior staff are on the HOT team, so that when they are in the process of helping individuals, system gaps that hamper effective service provision can also be addressed. Having high level people on the team who can make things happen is absolutely vital to this process.

The program's success is measured by not just housing someone, but also by keeping them housed. The intensity of services needed to do that requires all our public and nonprofit providers to rethink and redesign how services are provided. Case managers ensure that the person is

connected to all the services needed to keep them stably housed. With the initiation of the HOT teams, police contacts dropped from 38.46 per month to 0.04 per month.

The project manager is funded partly by the county and partly by St. Vincent's, which is the project manager. Additional contributions come from each of the service providers. Additional information on the program can be found online.

- County of Marin: **marinhot.org**
- City of San Rafael **https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/documents/homeless-outreach-team-hot-program-report-2016**
- City of San Rafael blog: **https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/departments/homelessness**

LifeMoves Homeless Outreach Team (HOT)

PROMISING PRACTICE

San Mateo LifeMoves is using a multifaceted therapeutic service model to end homelessness in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. The model includes using modern housing in conjunction with intensive and tailored health services.

One of its successful program elements is the Homeless Outreach Team, a team of trained case managers that reaches out to homeless individuals on the ground level. The goal is to transition them off the streets and eventually into stable housing. Because homelessness is a complex issue, HOT members typically work with a variety of different groups including local law enforcement, community stakeholders and businesses to successfully move homeless men and women into supportive housing. HOT members also provide homeless individuals with case management and connect them with essential services. This proactive approach helps reduce costs and expenses related to medical and law enforcement services.

With over 17 sites throughout the Bay Area, the nonprofit serves about 1,000 homeless individuals each night.

LifeMoves Outreach services are largely funded by the County of San Mateo Human Service Agency with Measure A funding. LifeMoves services are funded through a combination of many city, county and federal government contracts and private donations.

Families

Families experiencing homelessness may be harder to identify, as they may not be as visible as other populations. They can experience homelessness due to a number of reasons including job loss, income insecurity or unanticipated bills. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, families comprise about 35 percent of the homeless population. Homelessness among families significantly compounds toxic stress, which impacts children and parents alike and can lead to or exacerbate other issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence and truancy. A number of funding programs are available to cities and counties to assist homeless families. See the examples below and the Funding Options section for more information.

Saint John's Program for Real Change

BEST PRACTICE

Saint John's Program for Real Change operates the largest shelter in Sacramento County and the only one focused exclusively on homeless women and children. Its total daily capacity is 270, with an annual capacity of 1,000. Sacramento County's point-in-time count in July 2017 was 3,666 people living without permanent shelter, and 2,000 of those people were living outdoors.

Funded through a combination of private and public funders, including the USDA, California Department of Education, California Wellness Foundation, Allstate Foundation and Serving California, among many others, Saint John's is a true public-private partnership. For every $1 in county funding received, Saint John's raises $9 to serve more women and children with full programming.

Saint John's Program for Real Change is designed to support women and children in becoming permanently independent from "the system," thereby making room for others in need. The average woman who comes to Saint John's is 34 years old with two children. The challenges they face vary. However, 100 percent of the women lack stable work history/current employment. Other challenges include substance abuse (74 percent), domestic violence (68 percent), criminal history (60 percent), mental illness (54 percent) and lack of education (52 percent do not have a high school diploma or GED).

Originally founded as an emergency shelter in 1985, Saint John's has expanded into a 12–18 month program that provides women with the education, tools and habits needed to work and live independently.

The program provides housing and meals in coordination with on-site intensive, structured and individualized support including mental health therapy, alcohol and drug counseling, budgeting classes, basic education and hands-on employment training. Over the course of a year, each program participant receives an average of 675 hours of service each month.

The program model also supports reunification of women and children through Child Protection Services (CPS) processes, facilitating CPS-required education, appointments and supervised visits. In 2016, 20 women were reunited with 46 children.

Between 2014 and 2016, over 1,500 women and children were served through Saint John's. In 2016 alone, reduction in homelessness saved taxpayers a minimum of $13 million, thanks to the program.

Saint John's Program for Real Change is primarily funded by private donations and some public funds.

Job and Skills Training — City of Bakersfield

BEST PRACTICE

In May 2013, the City of Bakersfield partnered with the Bakersfield Homeless Center (BHC) to help solve the problem of highway litter after state budget cuts reduced Caltrans' resources to clean up highways. The partnership developed an innovative freeway litter cleanup program performed by members of the homeless community. The program would provide job training skills and increase employment opportunities for the homeless population and the problem of highway litter.

The funding for this program came from Caltrans and the Kern Council of Governments. Through this partnership, clients of BHC received paying jobs to clean the freeways. As a result, over 50 homeless individuals were employed at minimum wage. About 250 family members were in housing and approximately 64 percent paid their rent without any subsidy. Local businesses have also begun to participate in similar programs — the city now provides jobs in green waste sorting and animal care.

The successful program not only reduced the highway litter problem, but also decreased the homeless population and created an emerging labor force eager to work. Many of the individuals who participated in the program were able to receive better paying jobs in the private sector and in the city.

Community Service — Downtown Streets Team

BEST PRACTICE

Founded in 2005, Downtown Streets Team is a nonprofit addressing homelessness by not only providing solutions to homeless men and women, but also challenging them to take an active role in their recovery. This takes the form of having the homeless volunteer with Downtown Streets Team on beautification projects within their respective communities. In return, the volunteers or "team members" receive necessities including a stipend, vital health services and case management. The program offers a "ladder of success" system where team members can continue to improve their skills and move up the ladder, while gaining additional work responsibilities with the potential for promotion to managerial levels. Team members are also encouraged to share their stories with the community at schools, churches or business associations, which helps to shift the negative perceptions of homelessness. The eventual goal is to transition team members to full-time employment over the course of a year.

Downtown Streets Team operates in eight Bay Area communities (San Francisco, San Jose, Palo Alto, Santa Cruz, Hayward, Novato, San Rafael and Sunnyvale) and serves over 750 homeless men and women every week. In addition, through its beautification efforts, the nonprofit has removed over 2.8 million gallons of debris in the last year alone.

Funding differs in each community, but sources can include Public Works/Parks and Recreation departments, CDBG (economic development and human services), environmental agencies (water districts, environmental services departments, EPA), corporate sponsorships and Business Improvement Districts, along with county and city funding.

Law Enforcement

Law enforcement plays a critical role in addressing homelessness.

- ***Reentry Programs:*** These programs are aimed at helping men and women recently released from jail or prison successfully re-enter their community to reduce recidivism.
- ***Coordinated Outreach Teams:*** This approach involves the creation of a team that conducts outreach to homeless populations in communities. Law enforcement officers may be the first to respond to situations involving the homeless population but may not have all the necessary resources to effectively communicate with them. Therefore, these teams often consist of a law enforcement officer, health and human service representative and clinicians to provide the appropriate services to people.

Homelessness Coordinator — City of Citrus Heights Navigator Program

PROMISING PRACTICE

In 2015, the City of Citrus Heights faced a growing need to provide services to its homeless population. Post-recession, the city had experienced the reduction of services in the urban core. The Citrus Heights Police Department conducted a survey of the homeless community and found there was a predominant desire to stay in the city even though most homeless resources were not available within the city limits. Through its partnership with Sacramento Self Help Housing (SSHH) and the Citrus Heights Homeless Assistance Resource Team (HART), the city identified a need for a "navigator" or case manager for the local homeless population. The model has been used in other communities to facilitate enrollment into HUD's Coordinated Entry wait list and ranking system for available housing.

The navigator or homelessness coordinator serves as the main point of contact in the county's coordinated system and reaches out to homeless populations to connect them with services. In addition, the navigator works in the field to directly engage individuals where they are located. Based on an initial "vulnerability" test, the navigator assesses which services might work best for each homeless individual.

This position is fully funded with a combination of CDBG funds and other funding from the City of Citrus Heights.

Outreach Teams — City of Anaheim Homelessness Outreach Team (HOT)

PROMISING PRACTICE

The City of Anaheim is implementing a number of strategies to address homelessness, including outreach efforts through public safety and code enforcement. In 2013, the city created the Homelessness Outreach Team (HOT) in the Anaheim Police Department to strengthen relationships between the department and homeless populations. The team's goal is to reduce homelessness by finding long-term supportive housing for homeless individuals and families and by offering multidisciplinary, wrap-around services.

HOT is a collaborative model that partners with regional law enforcement agencies, Orange County Mental Health and other local nonprofits to provide comprehensive resources to the homeless population. Outreach officers are knowledgeable and up to speed on the number of existing resources that are available and can relay this information to individuals. In addition, as part of the Psychological Emergency Response Team (PERT), police officers are paired with mental health clinicians who both respond to calls and proactively patrol to seek people who may need assistance. PERT officers have specific training and knowledge in reaching out to individuals that may be suffering from mental health issues.

Since its creation, HOT has helped over 400 homeless individuals find supportive housing.

Creating a Homelessness Plan

Whether a city or county has been addressing homelessness for years or is just starting, having a plan is important. The plan provides direction for elected officials and staff as they make decisions about where to dedicate resources and offers a way to measure progress and success.

Whether the plan is for one year or multiple years, it is likely to involve multiple individual actions or strategies that may or may not be related. This section includes a series of questions a city or county should explore when deciding what strategies to include in its plan and a template to outline individual strategies. Depending on the jurisdiction, the plan might include anywhere from two to over 100 individual strategies.

This information was developed following a review of existing homelessness plans. Although plans vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, a number of themes emerged. A list of plans reviewed is included at the end of this section, and a customizable template is available at **www.ca-ilg.org/homelessness**.

Questions to Consider When Developing a Homelessness Plan

This list of questions is not exhaustive, but it will help any jurisdiction focus during the development of a homelessness plan. In all likelihood, asking these questions will lead to more questions that are specific to a specific jurisdiction or region.

- Will our strategies/plans be set annually or will they span years? How often will our jurisdiction review progress?
- Is our strategy/plan specific to our jurisdiction or are there efforts included that impact the region?
- Does our strategy/plan include government agency actions only or does it include actions of other community partners?
- Do we want to create a new department, agency or community organization to coordinate and oversee efforts?
- Who in our jurisdiction will lead and oversee the effort?
- What resources is our agency already using for this effort? Can additional resources be dedicated?
- Are we trying to address a specific population?
- Is our plan outcome based?
- What is the purpose of the plan? What are we trying to achieve?
- How will we determine if we are successful?
- Who is the audience?
- What is the role/responsibility of law enforcement?
- How will we share/represent our plan with the public?
- What other plans exist?
- How do we measure success?

Homelessness Plans: Template for Strategies

CATEGORY

(For organizational purposes, identify which category best describes the strategy)

- ❑ Prevention
- ❑ Coordinated Entry System
- ❑ Housing
- ❑ Other: _____
- ❑ Management and Services
- ❑ Income

RECOMMENDATION

(One or two sentences describing the recommendation or action item)

DESCRIPTION

(More in depth description of recommendation and strategy overall. May include additional information on the challenge the strategy is addressing.)

POPULATION(S) TARGETED

(A description of the jurisdiction's population and specifically the homeless population.)

- ❑ All
- ❑ Chronically Homeless Adult
- ❑ Families
- ❑ Homeless Pet Owners
- ❑ LGBTQ Community
- ❑ Single Adult
- ❑ Transitional Age Youth (TAY)
- ❑ Veteran
- ❑ Victims of Domestic Abuse
- ❑ Women
- ❑ Youth

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE

(Identification of current funding available or possible funding the agency will pursue.)

IMPLEMENTATION TIME-FRAME

(When is the strategy expected to be accomplished?)

LEAD AGENCY

(Who is the lead responsible agency? This may be a department within the jurisdiction or a community partner.)

_____

COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES

(A list of all other departments and agencies within the jurisdiction that will be involved in implementing the recommendation. Should also include departments/agencies that experience downstream impacts, such as public works and libraries.)

CONNECTION TO OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS (INCLUDING CITY/COUNTY)

(A list of community organizations or agencies outside the city or county government that will be involved in implementing the recommendation. May also include state agencies.)

BUDGET

(Discussion of the current resources the jurisdiction is putting towards addressing solutions and identification of other options that could be pursued.)

DATA

(What is the problem being addressed? What is already being done?)

IMPACT

(What is the impact on the broader community?)

Index of Strategies/Homelessness Plans

Note: Many cities and counties are collaborating on their plans. If you do not see a city plan listed individually, please refer to the county in which the city is located.

Cities of Alameda County: www.everyonehome.org

Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness: www.c3homes.org/sites/centralcoasthomelessness.oneeach.org/files/pictures/CA-603 percent20CoC percent20Governance percent20Charter_0.pdf

City of Chula Vista:
www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/development-services/housing/resources/homeless-frequently-asked-questions

City of Fairfield: www.fairfield.ca.gov/gov/depts/manager/quality_of_life/default.asp

City and County of Fresno: www.fresno.gov/citymanager/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2016/10/10yrPlanWhitepaper_v3b.pdf

Humboldt County and City of Eureka: www.humboldthousing.org

City of Los Angeles – Comprehensive Homelessness Strategy:
https://www.lamayor.org/comprehensive-homelessness-strategy

Los Angeles County – Approved Strategies to Address Homelessness:
http://priorities.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/HI-Report-Approved2.pdf

City of Long Beach: http://www.lbds.info/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=5847
http://longbeach.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=188833&GUID=7EDFEF7F-2A87-4D44-9AFD-3D7C4C44E2F8

Marin County: www.marinhhs.org/10-year-plan

Monterey and San Benito Counties: http://mcdss.co.monterey.ca.us/reports/downloads/lead_me_home_01_13.pdf

Nevada and Placer Counties: http://www.hrcscoc.org/resource-links.html

City of Sacramento: http://sacramento.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=22&clip_id=3820&meta_id=470422

Sacramento Steps Forward: http://sacramentostepsforward.org/strategic-action-plan/strategic-action-plan

San Bernardino County: www.sbcounty.gov/dbh/sbchp/Tenyearstrategy.aspx

City and County of San Francisco: http://dhsh.sfgov.org/

San Joaquin County:
www.sjgov.org/commdev/cgi-bin/cdyn.exe/handouts-planning/SJCoCP_PRD_FULL_CONPLAN_2015-04-02.pdf

San Luis Obispo County: www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning/Housing_and_Economic_Development/10yearplan.htm

San Mateo County: http://hsa.smcgov.org/sites/hsa.smcgov.org/files/HomelessReport_Final.pdf

Santa Clara County: http://destinationhomescc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Community_Plan_to_End_Homelessness_in_Santa_Clara_County_web.pdf

Santa Cruz County and Cities of Santa Cruz, Capitola, Scotts Valley and Watsonville:
www.sccoplanning.com/Portals/2/HSP-FullReport-FINAL-Small.pdf

Sonoma County:
http://sonoma-county-continuum-of-care.wikispaces.com/Sonoma+County percentE2 percent80 percent99s+10-Year+Homeless+Action+Plan

Stanislaus County: www.preventionfocus.net/homelessness-initiative/

City of Woodland:
https://cityofwoodland.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2692353&GUID=A9221D94-9FFD-46E6-9C70-3C5798E2ECA1

Homeless and Poverty Action Coalition (Yolo County, and Cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Winters and Woodland):
www.yolocounty.org/health-human-services/adult-aging/homeless-services/homeless-and-poverty-action-coalition-hpac

Partnering for Greater Impact

Complex problems such as homelessness are not often solved or addressed by a single entity. Local governments should consider a number of key partners when addressing homelessness, such as the business community, nonprofits, the faith-based community and philanthropic organizations. In many cases, these entities are already addressing homelessness — establishing partnerships with them will allow your city or county to amplify existing efforts and enhance other organizations' efforts. This section offers tips to consider when forming partnerships and examples of successful partnerships.

Local governments are attuned to opportunities for pooling resources and working together to meet the needs of their collective citizens. The benefits of collaboration are vast, but can be summarized by two key points:

1. More efficient use of resources

Put simply, you can do more with less. By pooling financial and human resources, time, data and capital, the savings realized can be used for other priorities. The cost of operations and services decreases while the quantity and quality of services increases. Collaboration reduces duplication and provides opportunities to enhance and expand programming.

2. Increased effectiveness in the community

The whole is greater than the sum of its individual parts. By working together across jurisdictions, local government agencies increase their reach, power and positive impact in the communities they serve. Collaboration allows agencies to increase their impact.

When local government is more efficient and effective, it builds greater trust and support from community members. Working together creates a united community image, shares both the challenges and the rewards, and enhances the positive attitude residents have toward local elected officials and their community.

However, real collaboration takes significant time and is exceedingly hard work if done right and investments in relationships and a culture of collaboration are successfully established. Complex community problems are not created overnight. Similarly, successful solutions to vexing community challenges take time to develop and must include a comprehensive and layered approach and engagement of multiple stakeholders. Although the evolution of successful collaboration is fluid and dynamic, initiating and developing collaborative efforts require a strategic, organized and intentional approach. Every path to collaboration is unique to the people involved and the specific community's assets and resources. However, an understanding of the general stages in the overall process and the steps that can be taken will help drive collaborative efforts forward.

The pyramid of collaboration, identified by Sidney L. Gardner, president of Children and Family Futures, outlines four broad stages that are particularly relevant to local government collaboration.[22] These stages reflect the importance of starting the collaborative process strategically and allowing for a more fluid process as the collaboration evolves. The pyramid's four stages of collaboration are:

- Information exchange/relationship building;
- Joint projects;
- Changing rules; and
- Systems change.

Information Exchange/Relationship Building

Collaboration is built on strong relationships. Therefore, the most critical stage for working together successfully is getting to know each other – both the individual people and the agencies they represent. During this stage, local government agencies and their partners exchange information about their missions, goals, mandates, programs and priorities. They discuss overlapping concerns about their shared constituencies and explore the local conditions and environments that impact each agency. Key considerations for this stage include:

- Taking time to build genuine relationships — focus on getting to know each other, not on what you need from each other;
- Understanding the current environment for each potential partner;
- Assessing and engaging the community — determine assets, needs, concerns and priorities from the community; and
- Exploring possible collaborative solutions — brainstorm ideas inside and outside the box.

Joint Projects

Finding and addressing the "low-hanging fruit" is a common successful strategy for building partnerships that lead to collaboration. It creates an early win and initiates a shared sense of accomplishment. This often occurs through joint projects when two or more local government agencies dedicate resources for a shared purpose. Joint projects are often stimulated by a funding opportunity requiring collaboration, an opportunity to combine and leverage existing resources across agencies or a recognition that the project will be done more effectively and/or reach more people as a joint effort.[23] At this stage, local agencies continue to operate as they did before, but they may undertake one or more joint projects over time to address an identified need. Key considerations for this stage are:

- Identifying resources and staff that each agency will contribute;
- Developing planning documents and/or timelines, such as a joint use agreement, work plan or memorandum of understanding; and
- Focusing on what you agree on and setting aside other issues. Be willing to compromise when necessary.

Changing the Rules

Successful collaboration requires a culture of "we" rather than "me." This stage is marked by the development of a collective voice of collaboration, rather than special interests. Local government agencies that move beyond joint projects think in a collaborative way from the beginning about the challenges facing their community — their first response to a new challenge or opportunity is to call their partners.[24] Specifically, changing the rules means seeking broader policy change among partner agencies and realigning funding streams to support collaboration. This stage is also marked by a focus on evaluating the process of collaboration and not just on the joint project itself. Key considerations for this stage include:

- Being cognizant of constituents' comfort levels – don't try to do everything at once. Allow people to grow into changes and new policies;

22 The CCS Partnership, in collaboration with the California School Boards Association, developed the resource *Building Healthy Communities: A School Leader's Guide to Collaboration and Community Engagement*. A fuller description of Sidney Gardner's pyramid of collaboration can be found in Chapter 3 of this resource. The guide can be found at **www.ca-ilg.org/stretchingcommunity dollars**.

23, 24 CSBA, CCS Partnership, *Building Healthy Communities: A School Leaders Guide to Collaboration and Community Engagement, 2009.*

- Fostering open, transparent and consistent communication between partners and the community; and
- Recognizing organizational limitations — be up-front with potential legal, cultural or capacity limitations.

Systems Change

When a cultural shift occurs that results in local government agencies changing the way they do business, they have entered the systems change stage of collaboration. This happens over time and through sustained leadership that has skillfully balanced patience with intentional action and a relentless focus on the big picture. Systems change requires local government agencies to rethink and redirect existing resources — including new allocation of funding, staff, methods of accountability and a new collective focus on goals and outcomes. Key considerations for this stage are:

- Recognizing that leadership matters — in both quality and consistency;
- Continuously renew commitments and sharing the vision;
- Continuously learning from what others are doing; and
- Turning barriers into opportunities.

The Institute for Local Government, a League and CSAC affiliate, offers a number of resources to help local governments begin and expand partnerships. Visit **www.ca-ilg.org** for more information.

LA Home for Good

In 2010, in response to the growing issue of homelessness in Los Angeles, United Way worked with the LA Area Chamber of Commerce to launch Home For Good. The partnership has brought together various stakeholders from both public and private sectors to coordinate ways to address homelessness through permanent housing systems and solutions.

Home For Good works with over 300 cross-sector partners to create systems of change to end homelessness in LA County, starting with chronically homeless individuals and veterans. Home For Good focuses on:

- Creating a "no-wrong door" system that more effectively matches client needs with available housing resources;
- Strategically investing in solutions through a Funders Collaborative that convenes philanthropy and public funders;
- Engaging all Angelenos to be part of the solution through community-wide education and advocacy campaigns; and
- Tracking community progress toward a set of shared goals and metrics to ensure accountability and advancement.

The Funders Collaborative is unique in convening different sources of funding, including the city and county, public and private sectors and nonprofits, to ensure that resources are distributed effectively.

Since its launch, the initiative has built systems and changed policies to prioritize those most in need. This has ensured that over 40,000 of LA's most vulnerable homeless neighbors have found their way home for good.

The effort is funded by a combination of private donations and foundation support.

Sacramento Steps Forward

Originally created in 2009, Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF) is a nonprofit organization working to end homelessness in the Sacramento region. SSF has taken a collaborative approach to addressing homelessness by developing a regional effort with multiple stakeholders and partners working collectively on managing resources and services. In addition, SSF has employed a data-driven and outcomes-based approach to ensure that it is implementing effective strategies and practices.

SSF is in a unique position to lead this regional effort as a nonprofit responsible for managing Housing and Urban Development funds for homelessness. The organization uses a Housing First approach to reduce reliance on temporary shelters and increase transition into permanent housing.

SSF is funded by public and private partners through performance-based grants, charitable grants and contracted services.

San Leandro Homeless Compact

In March 2016, the City of San Leandro (Human Services and Police departments) partnered with Building Futures with Women & Children (BFWC, a local nonprofit service provider) and the Rental Housing Association of Southern Alameda County (a landlords' association) to form the San Leandro Homeless Compact, a collaborative dedicated to providing long-term housing and services to chronically homeless individuals in San Leandro. The compact is the first of its kind in Northern California, and uses a Housing First approach, due to a tight housing and rental market. However, the compact's key component is the collaboration between the local government, BFWC and landlords to secure housing in tandem with vital services. The compact provides 25 housing units for chronically homelessness individuals in San Leandro. The Rental Housing Association, along with the compact, helps coordinate landlords to provide the housing and BFWC provides a variety of supportive services for individuals staying in the units. Participants are assigned case managers to help coordinate health services and prepare them for success and independence.

The compact is funded by the city and county and HUD vouchers.

Interfaith Summit on Homelessness

In June 2017, the Los Angeles County's Homeless Initiative and LA Voice, a local multi-ethnic interfaith organization of 60 congregations throughout LA County, hosted the county's first Interfaith Summit on Homelessness, with support from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. The summit, titled "Pursuing the Promise Together," focused on combatting homelessness by building collaboration and a common vision between faith-based organizations and the county. It also highlighted homeless initiative strategies in which the county and faith organizations can partner and created avenues for faith-based organizations to connect to the Coordinated Entry System.

To support the faith-based organizations' discernment process, the county developed a Discernment Guide to help them prepare for collaboration. Through this process, 31 faith-based organizations expressed interest in exploring partnerships with the county in support of one or more specific homeless initiative strategies and are currently collaborating with county departments and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority to discern how each faith organization can support the countywide homeless system. The Homeless Initiative and LA Voice are committed to continued engagement with faith-based organizations to build capacity and partner in a meaningful way to combat homelessness.

Other than the support received from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation via a grant to LA Voice, the county incurred no cost to pursue this collaboration with the faith-based community.

The Discernment Guide can be accessed at: **http://homeless.lacounty.gov/the-action-plan.**

Building Support for the Spectrum of Housing in the Community

Public Outreach and Engagement

Housing can be a contentious and complicated topic in communities. For this reason, cities and counties are increasing their public engagement efforts in the planning process, which offers many benefits. Engaging the public early in the decision-making process can help local public agencies avoid costly pitfalls and mistakes. Involving residents and others in the process can generate more support for the final decisions reached by city or county decision-makers. Local governments can benefit from public engagement in the following ways:

- Better identification of the public's values, ideas and recommendations;
- More informed residents;
- Improved local agency decision making and actions, with better impacts and outcomes;
- More community buy-in and support, with less contentiousness;
- More civil discussion and decision-making;
- Faster project implementation with less need to revisit issues repeatedly;
- Increased trust among residents and in local government; and
- Higher rates of community participation and leadership development.

In addition to more traditional public meetings and city council and county board of supervisors' meetings, local governments can explore a number of options when engaging their community in the planning process, including the following.

- **Advisory Committees:** A representative group, typically composed of volunteer stakeholders, is convened to guide a planning effort over an extended period of time. To ensure that membership is representative, these committees include hard-to-reach populations such as youth, immigrants and low-income individuals or advocates.

- **Charrettes:** A facilitated multiple-day process that includes interested stakeholders. Participants develop solutions that simultaneously address potential concerns.
- **Focus Groups:** Small groups of stakeholders brought together for a limited amount of time to provide their knowledge of a project/area and discuss their concerns.
- **Participatory Mapping:** Residents identify community assets, needs and opportunities on a large photo aerial map of the community. Participants can be encouraged to use sticky dots, markers or other similar items to indicate priorities and concerns.
- **Scenario Planning:** A visioning process during which the public helps a local agency generate proposed alternatives for future growth and development. Computer-based modeling tools are often used.

Public Engagement Resources

ILG offers resources for cities and counties to help them improve outreach and engagement efforts. Below is a sample of the resources available.

Engaging the Public in Planning for Housing. This resource helps inform local officials about the importance of engaging the public in planning for housing and outlines steps to ensure that their community is part of the process.

Building Healthy and Vibrant Communities: Achieving Results through Community Engagement. This resource helps local officials inform residents about what land use planning is, who is involved, why community engagement matters and ways to participate.

TIERS Public Engagement Framework. ILG has developed a new framework any local government can use to plan and execute public engagement efforts. This framework outlines five steps — Think, Initiate, Engage, Review, Shift — that local governments can follow to begin and improve public engagement processes in their communities.

Beyond the Usuals: Ideas to Encourage Broader Public Engagement in Community Decision-Making. Even with the best intentions to encourage broad participation, local officials often find that only a relatively small number of community members participate in public conversations and forums. This resource provides strategies for achieving broader representation in local public engagement efforts.

Partnering with Community-Based Organizations for More Broad-Based Public Engagement. Many agencies use a strategy of nurturing relationships with community-based organizations to better reach and engage a broader cross section of residents. The important benefits from these partnerships include the ability to:

- Extend the agency's education and outreach capacities so more residents are aware and informed;
- Balance the most involved advocates' input with perspectives representing more of the community at large;
- Reduce misperceptions, mistrust and contentiousness;
- Identify broader community-based resources and recommendations;
- Develop communication channels for keeping people informed over time;
- Enhance the cultural competency of engagement plans and increase the ability to translate issues into relevant questions/framing and accessible language; and
- Reach people emotionally as well as physically.

Dealing with Deeply Held Concerns and other Challenges to Public Engagement Processes. Differences of opinion can trigger strong concerns and emotions held by community residents and groups. Such deeply held concerns can present challenges to a local agency sponsoring or organizing a public engagement process. It is important to make sure that these concerns are addressed effectively to ensure the opportunity for all perspectives to be heard. This resource assists local governments in designing and preparing for public engagement processes that are effective, responsive and civil — even when participants hold very strong views.

Effective Public Engagement through Strategic Communication. This resource offers advice on communication strategies before, during and after an agency's public engagement effort.

Planning Public Engagement: Key Questions for Local Officials. This resource outlines a number of questions to consider when planning outreach and engagement efforts, including:

- Is this the right issue?
- Do you have time and resources?
- Is local political leadership on board?
- Is the community included in your planning?
- Is there "history" that needs attention first?
- Is there a role for consultants?
- How will talk be linked to action?
- Will a clear purpose lead your process?
- How will participants be selected?
- How will you achieve more inclusive engagement?
- Is there a communications plan?
- Will you "close the circle" with participants and the community?
- How will you learn from the experience?

To access these resources and more, visit the ILG website at **www.ca-ilg.org/engagement**.

Conclusion

The League and CSAC Joint Homelessness Task Force's goal was to gain a mutual understanding of the statewide homelessness problem and how communities were working to address it. The Task Force examined a number of innovative solutions that cities and counties are testing and implementing to improve the lives of community members throughout California.

Like most major challenges facing cities and counties, the problem of homelessness will not be solved overnight, and it continues to evolve. Underlying causes, funding, services, programs and data are constantly changing. In just the past year while the Task Force was meeting, California has seen changes — some of them very encouraging. In the next few years, cities and counties can expect to see new funding become available, data sharing will become more streamlined and available and savings will be realized. But much work remains to be done.

As we move forward toward solutions, cities, counties, nonprofits and other stakeholders must do so together. The League and CSAC will continue this work through their policy committees and boards of directors — and cities and counties will continue this important, essential work in their communities.

Additional Resources

Glossary, Santa Clara County: www.sccgov.org/sites/osh/ContinuumofCare/Documents/Glossary percent20of percent20terms.pdf

Glossary, Homeless Hub: http://homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/homelessness-101/homelessness-glossary

National Alliance to End Homelessness: https://endhomelessness.org

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness: https://www.usich.gov

Funding Options to Address Homelessness:
www.counties.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/funding_options_to_address_homelessness111516.pdf

Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council:
www.hcd.ca.gov/policy-research/partnering-other-agencies/homeless-coordinating-financing-council.shtml

CA Department of Housing and Community Development – Plans and Reports:
http://hcd.ca.gov/policy-research/plans-reports/index.shtml#sha

HUD Continuum of Care Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Reports:
www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-homeless-populations-and-subpopulations-reports
http://lao.ca.gov/handouts/socservices/2017/Youth-Homelessness-101017.pdf
http://lao.ca.gov/handouts/Econ/2016/Overview-State-Homelessness-Programs-022516.pdf

Getting Home: Outcomes from Housing High-Cost Homeless Hospital Patients, Flaming & Lee (2013)

A Pilot Study of the Impact of Housing First-Supported Housing for Intensive Users of Medical Hospitalization & Sobering Services, D. Srebnik (2013), *American Journal of Public Health*, Feb. 103(2), 316–21

An Intervention to Improve Care & Reduce Costs for High-Risk Patients With Frequent Hospital Admissions: A Pilot Study, M. Raven & K. Doran (2011), BioMed Central Health Services Research

"Begin at Home": A Housing First Pilot Project for Chronically Homeless Single Adults, D. Srebnik (2010).

Twelve-Month Client Outcomes and Service Use in a Multisite Project for Chronically Homelessness Adults, L. Richards, S. McGraw, L. Araki, et. al. (2010), *Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research*

Where We Sleep: Costs When Homeless & Housed in Los Angeles, Flaming & Burns (2009)

Effect of Housing and Case Management on Emergency Room Visits and Hospitalizations Among Chronically Ill Homeless Adults, Sandowski & Kee (2009), *Journal of American Medical Association*

Health Care and Public Service Use and Costs Before and After Provision of Housing for Chronically Homeless Persons With Severe Alcohol Problems, Larimer & Malone (2009), *Journal of American Medical Association*

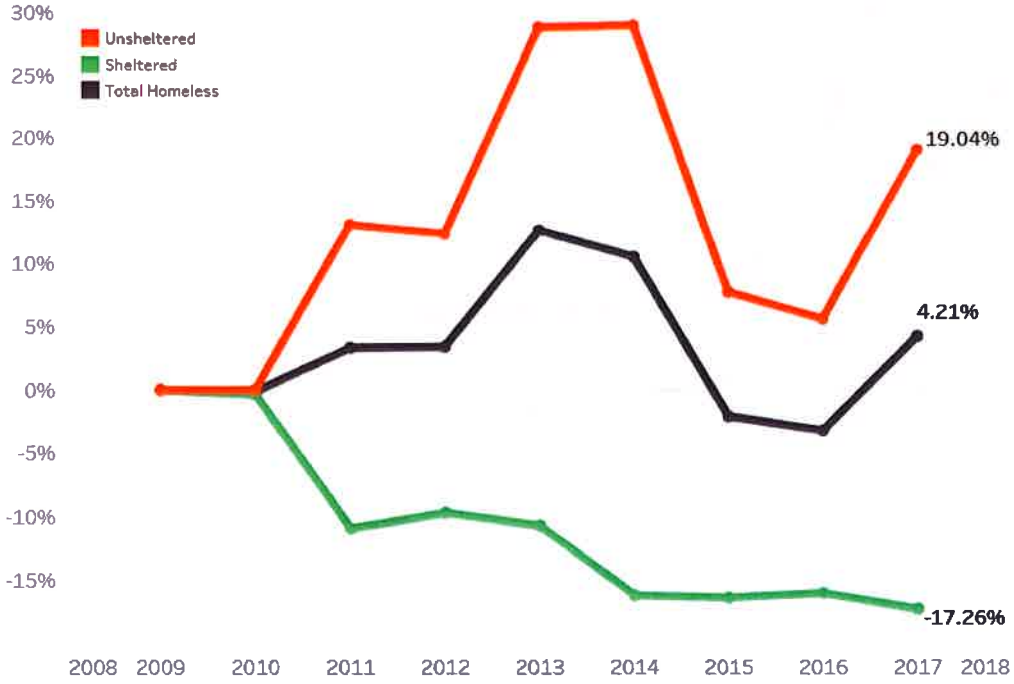
Rhode Island's Housing First Program Evaluation, E. Hirsh & I. Glasser (2008)

Frequent User of Health Services Initiative, Final Evaluation, Linkins & Brya (2008)

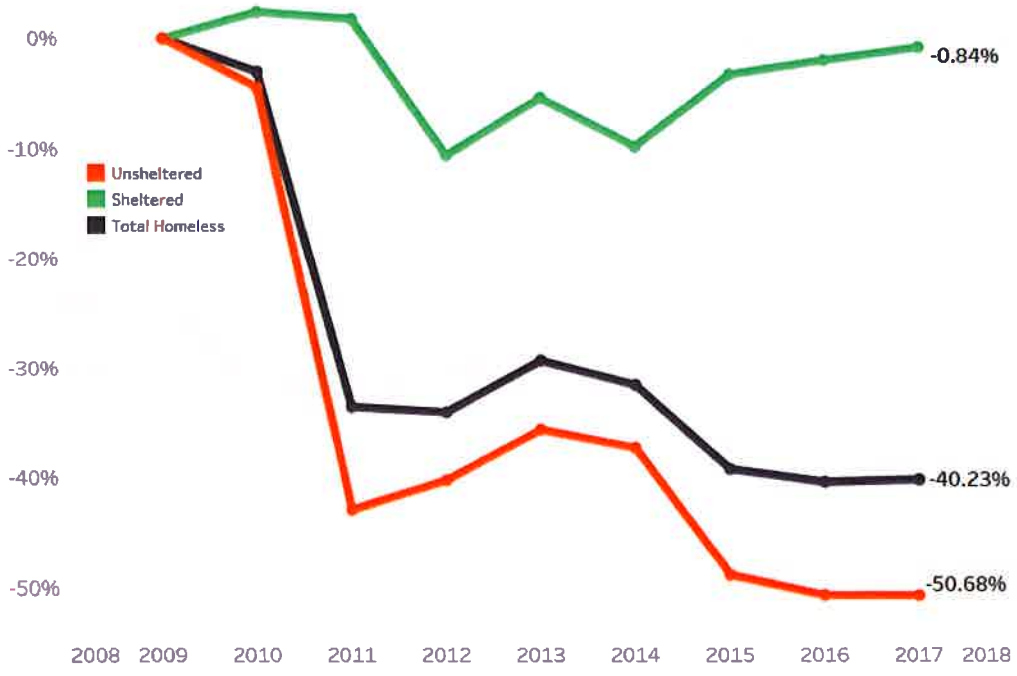
Appendix

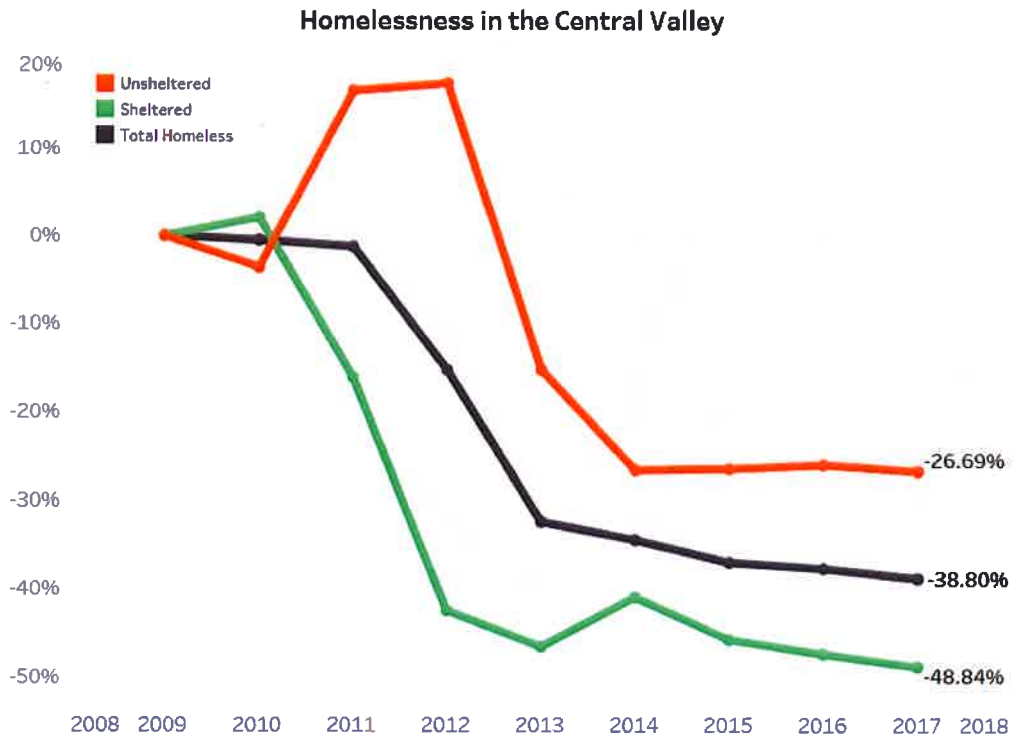
Source for all Appendix charts:
https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2017-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

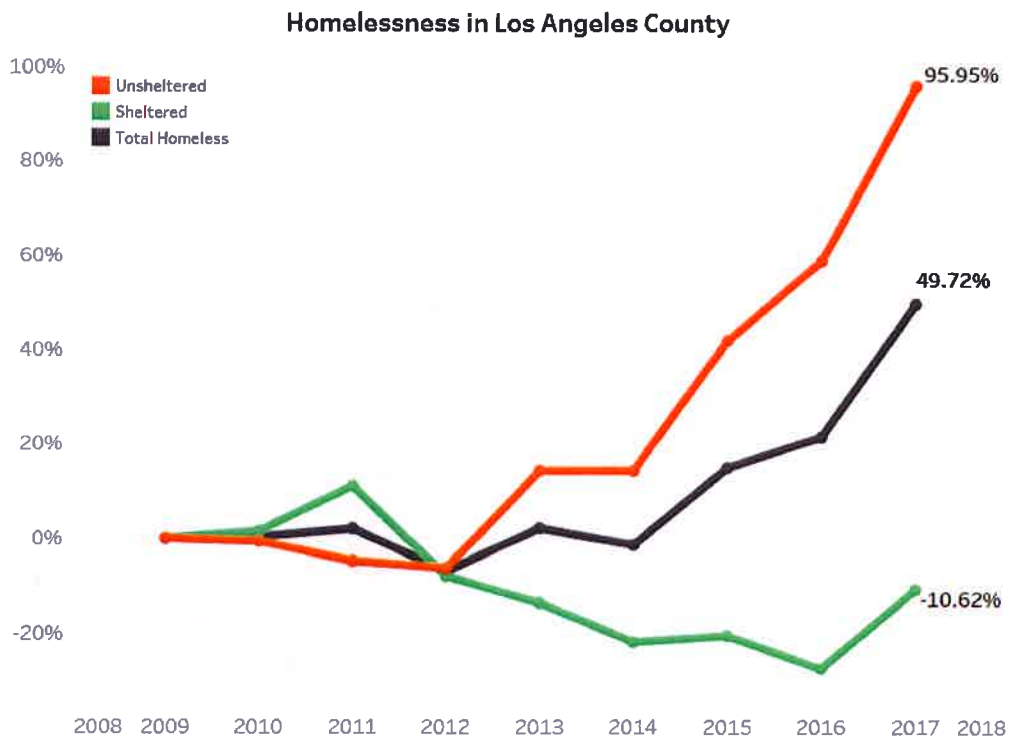
Homelessness in the Bay Area



Homelessness on the Central Coast

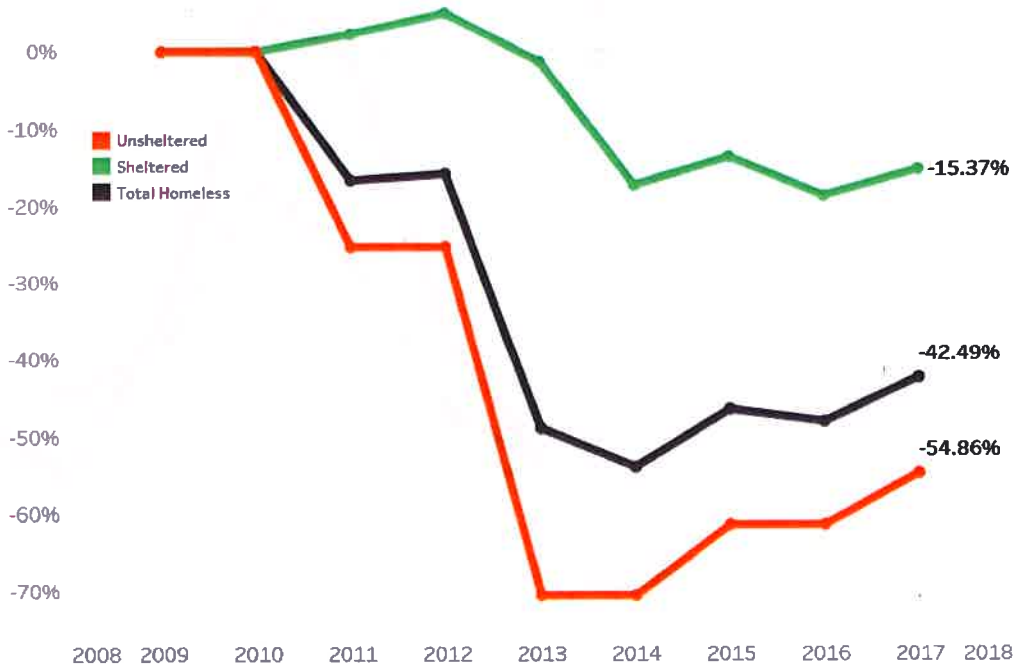



Homelessness in the Central Valley
Unsheltered
Sheltered
Total Homeless
20%
10%
0%
-10%
-20%
-30%
-40%
-50%
-26.69%
-38.80%
-48.84%
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018

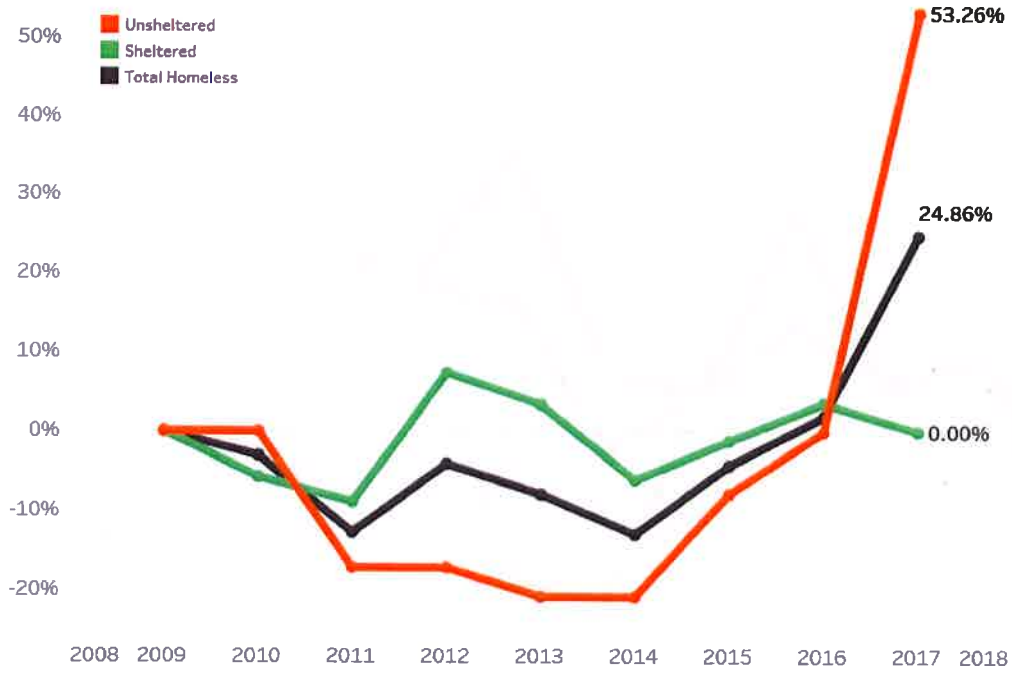

Homelessness in Los Angeles County
Unsheltered
Sheltered
Total Homeless
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
-20%
95.95%
49.72%
-10.62%
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018

Homelessness in the Northern Counties

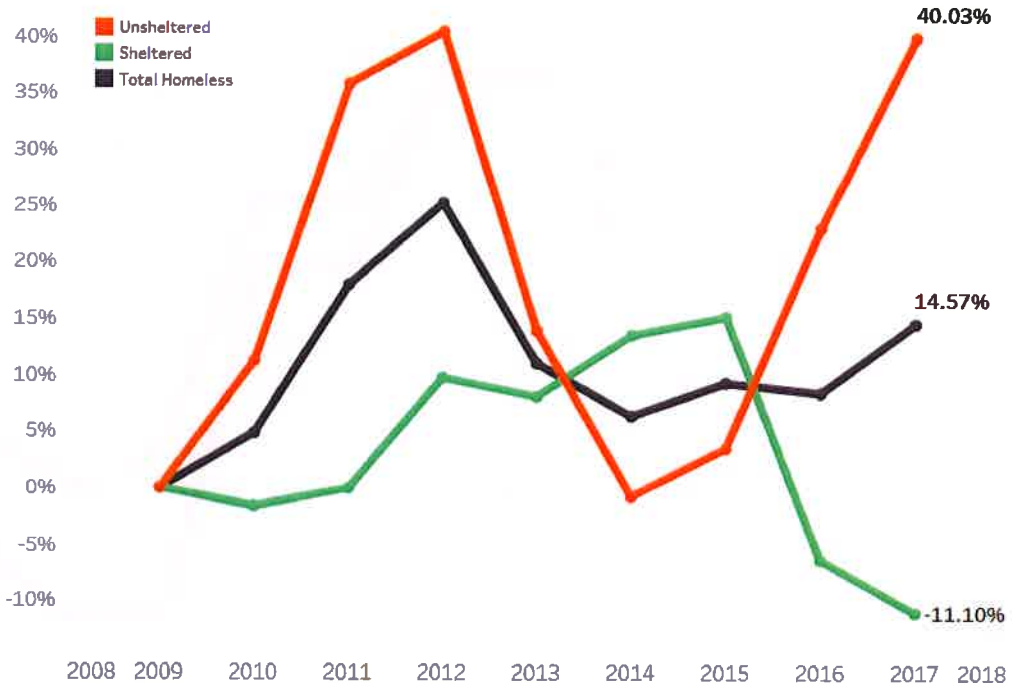
Homelessness in Orange County

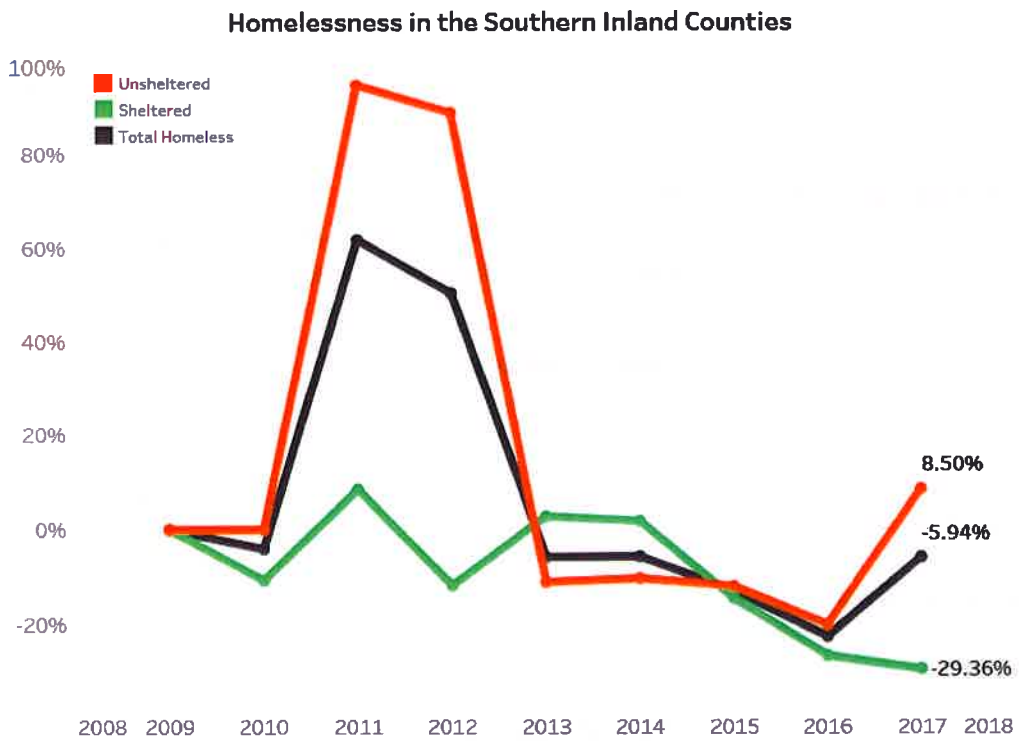


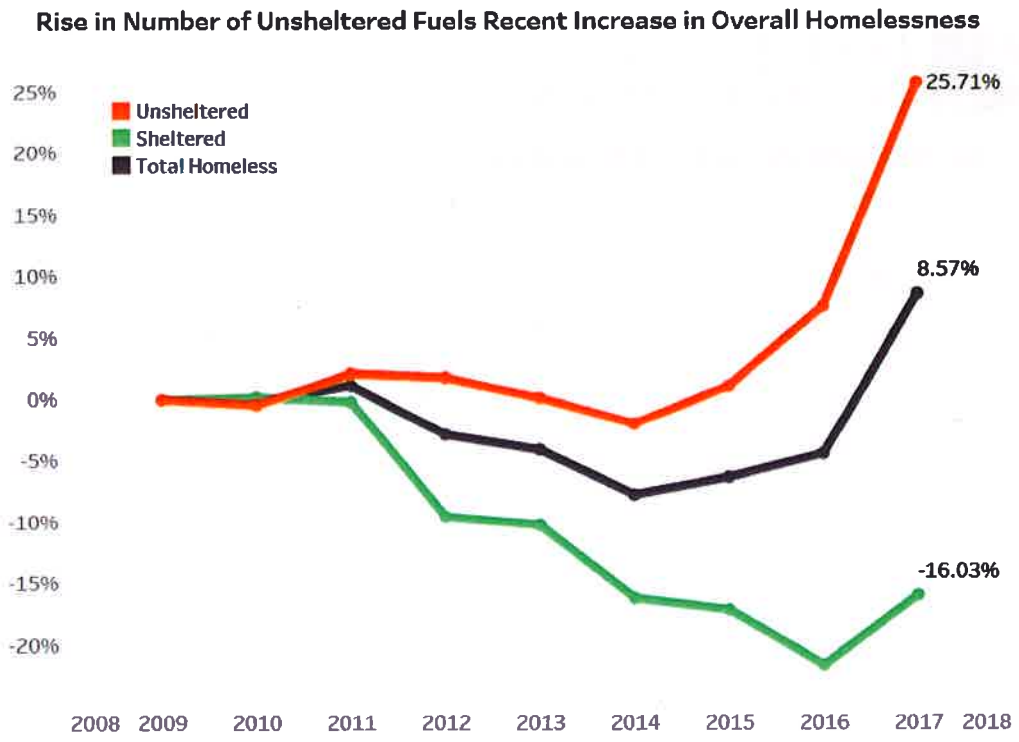
Homelessness in Sacramento and the Foothills



Homelessness in San Diego County




Homelessness in the Southern Inland Counties
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
-20%
Unsheltered
Sheltered
Total Homeless
8.50%
-5.94%
-29.36%
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018


Rise in Number of Unsheltered Fuels Recent Increase in Overall Homelessness
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
-5%
-10%
-15%
-20%
Unsheltered
Sheltered
Total Homeless
25.71%
8.57%
-16.03%
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018

California State Association of Counties®

About the California State Association of Counties

The primary purpose of CSAC is to represent county government before the California legislature, administrative agencies and the federal government. CSAC places a strong emphasis on educating the public about the value and need for county programs and services.

For more information and to access the CSAC's resources, visit **www.counties.org**.

About the League of California Cities

The League of California Cities is an association of California city officials who work together to enhance their knowledge and skills, exchange information, and combine resources so that they may influence policy decisions that affect cities.

For more information and to access the League's resource, visit **www.cacities.org**.

About the Institute for Local Government

The Institute for Local Government (ILG) is the nonprofit 501(c)(3) research and education affiliate of the League of California Cities, the California State Association of Counties and the California Special Districts Association. Its mission is to promote good government at the local level with practical, impartial and easy-to-use resources for California communities.

For more information and to access the Institute's resources, visit **www.ca-ilg.org**.

Homelessness Task Force Report

February 2018

INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES

CSAC