

Nowhere to Go: Advancing structural solutions to homelessness



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Disclosures

Financial Relationships

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- Editorial boards of Academic Psychiatry and Community Mental Health Journal, column editor Psychiatric Services
- Reviewer for several academic journals

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Homelessness is a *structural problem*
with *structural solutions*, *NOT* a mental health
problem with mental health solutions

We know what works –
Housing, data, coordination, decriminalization

Services without housing can harm
rather than help



Part 1. Homelessness Is a Structural Problem with Structural Solutions

Mental illness makes someone more structurally vulnerable, but illness itself does not *cause* homelessness



Social isolation



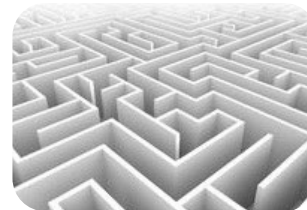
Housing discrimination



Employment discrimination



Income inequality



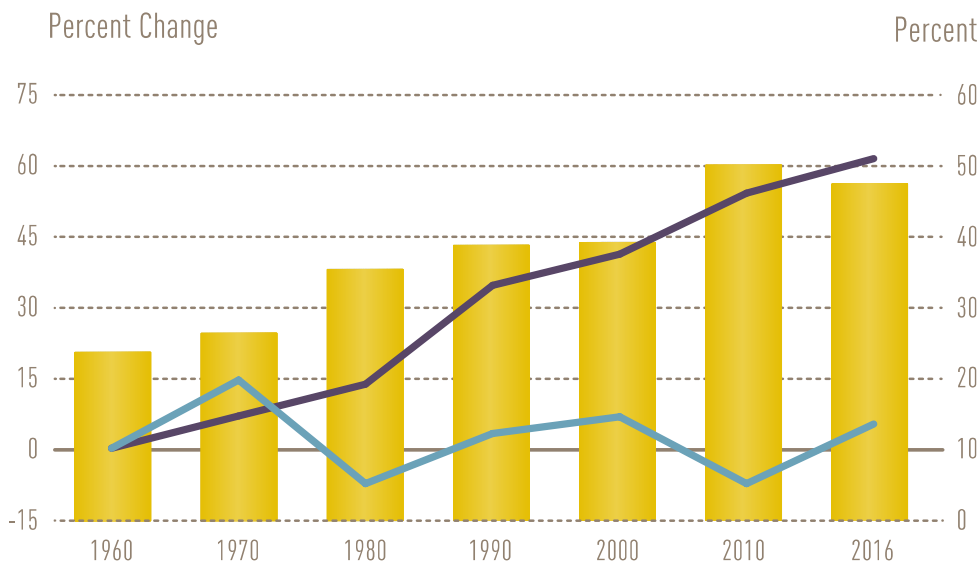
Barriers to public benefits



Criminalization

Homelessness Is a *Structural Problem* - *Housing Unaffordability*

The Sharp Divergence in Housing Costs and Incomes Has Fueled a Long-Term Increase in Cost-Burdened Renters



● Median Renter Income ● Median Gross Rent
● Share with Cost Burdens (Right scale)

Cost-burdened households spend more than 30% of their annual income on housing

1 in 3 of all US households are cost-burdened

Homelessness Is a *Structural Problem* - *Housing Unaffordability*

UCLA

The Washington Post

Inflation is making homelessness worse

Rising prices and soaring rents are taking their toll across the country

By [Abha Bhattarai](#) and [Rachel Siegel](#)

July 3, 2022 at 8:00 a.m. EDT

“With every \$100 increase in median rent, there's a 9% increase in the estimated homelessness rate, according to a report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office.”

TABLE 1: LEAST AND MOST SEVERE SHORTAGES OF RENTAL HOMES AFFORDABLE TO EXTREMELY LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS ACROSS THE 50 LARGEST METROPOLITAN AREAS

LEAST SEVERE		MOST SEVERE	
Metropolitan Area	Affordable and Available Rental Homes per 100 Renter Households	Metropolitan Area	Affordable and Available Rental Homes per 100 Renter Households
Providence-Warwick, RI-MA	50	Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV	13
Pittsburgh, PA	48	Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	18
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	47	Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL	18
Louisville/Jefferson County, KY-IN	42	Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX	19
Cleveland-Elyria, OH	41	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	20
Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN	41	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	20
Buffalo-Cheektowaga-Niagara Falls, NY	39	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	20
Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, CT	38	San Diego-Carlsbad, CA	20
Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD	38	Sacramento--Roseville--Arden-Arcade, CA	22
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	37	Austin-Round Rock, TX	22

Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2020 5-Year ACS PUMS data.

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Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2020 5-Year ACS PUMS data.

Homelessness Is a *Structural Problem* - *Housing Unavailability*

CURBED

THE HOUSING MARKET

MAY 17, 2022

New York Now Has More Airbnb Listings Than Apartments for Rent

By Kim Velsey

Two hundred fifty years of slavery. Ninety years of Jim Crow. Sixty years of separate but equal. Thirty-five years of racist housing policy. Until we reckon with our compounding moral debts, America will never be whole.

Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations”



Part 1. Homelessness Is a Structural Problem with Structural Solutions

Housing Supply and Affordability

- Promoting housing construction
- Housing subsidies
- Mixed-income housing policies
- Eliminating single family zoning

Homelessness Prevention

- Renter protections
- Rental assistance
- Identification of households at-risk for homelessness
- Addressing Section 8 discrimination
- Universal basic income



Housing and Housing Retention for People Who Are Unhoused

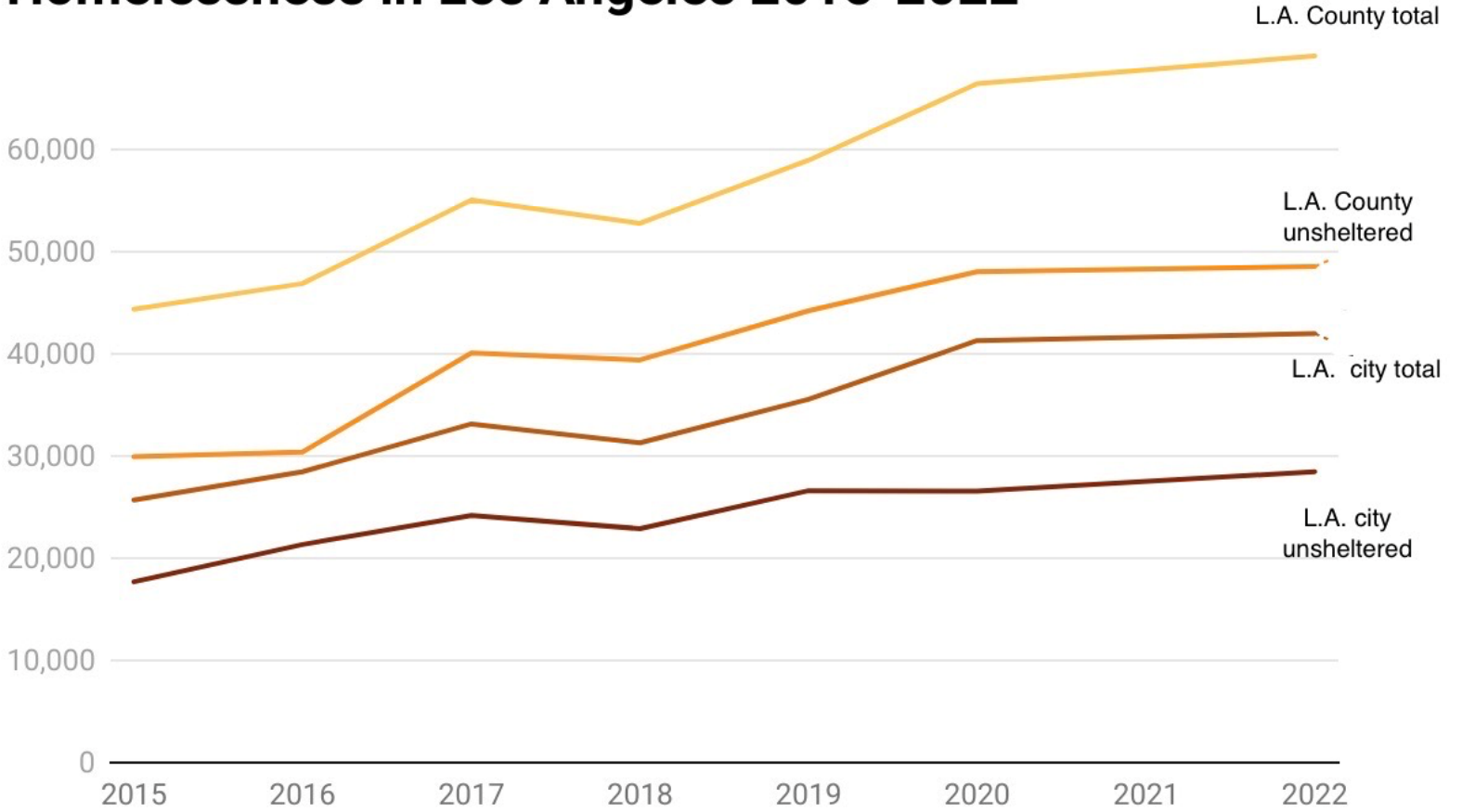
- Decriminalization
- Housing First = permanent housing + intensive services
- Low-demand housing and housing choice
- Non-law enforcement-based outreach services

In Los Angeles, we

- **Do not** have a right to shelter or housing
- **Do not** have a countywide coordinated approach to homeless outreach, services, and housing
- **Do not** have adequate shelter or permanent housing capacity
- **Do** have an overreliance on short-term solutions and criminalization

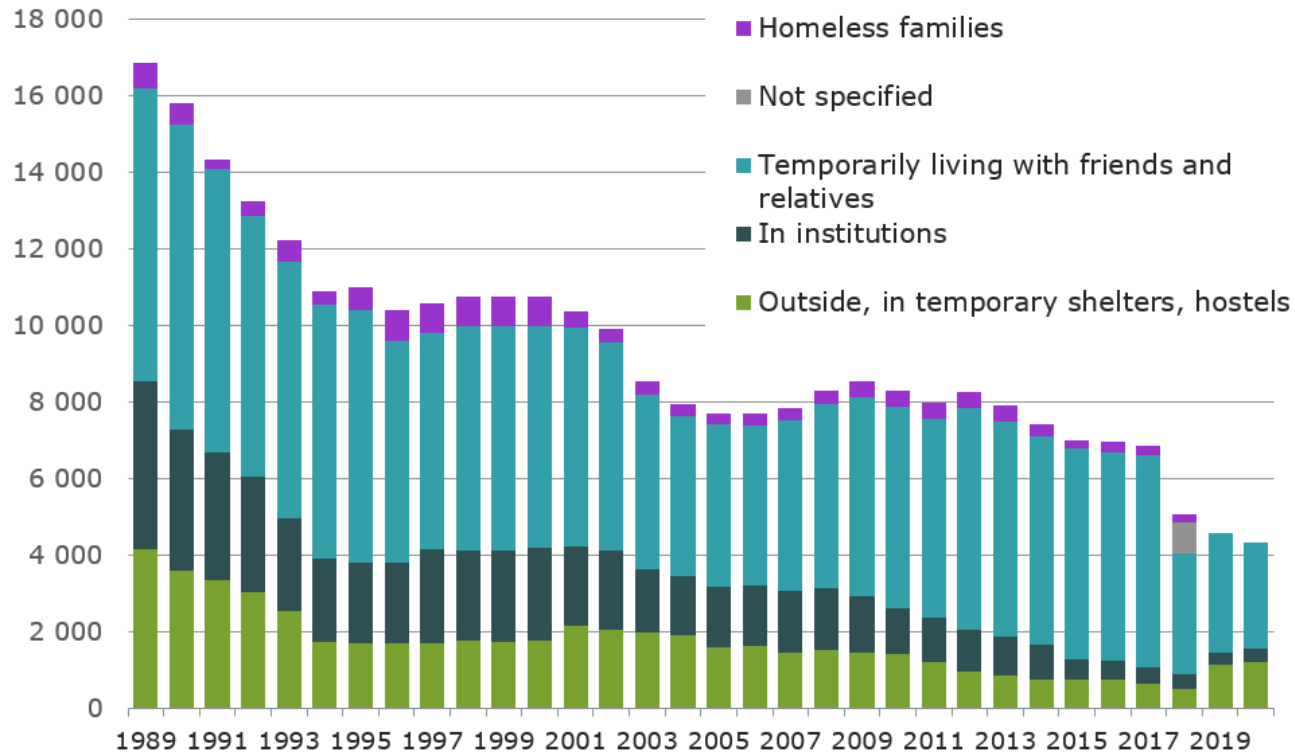
City	Total Homeless	% Unsheltered	Total Unsheltered
Los Angeles County (2022)	69,144	70.2%	48,548

Homelessness in Los Angeles 2015-2022



Source: Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (There was no count in 2021)

We know what works – Housing, data, coordination, decriminalization



Finland's Homeless Initiatives: 2008 - Present

UCLA

Finland's Homeless Initiatives: 2008 - Present

Constitutional
Right to Housing

Transition from
Shelters to
Permanent
Housing

Shifting away from emergency shelters toward permanent housing

Year	Supported housing	Independent rental apartments	Hostels and shelters
1985	127	65	2,121
2008	552	2,033	558
2016	1,309	2,433	52

Source: Kaakinen 2017

FIGURE | *Housing options for homeless people in Helsinki*

Finland's Homeless Initiatives: 2008 - Present

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Right to Housing

Transition from
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Permanent
Housing

Finland's Homeless Initiatives: 2008 - Present

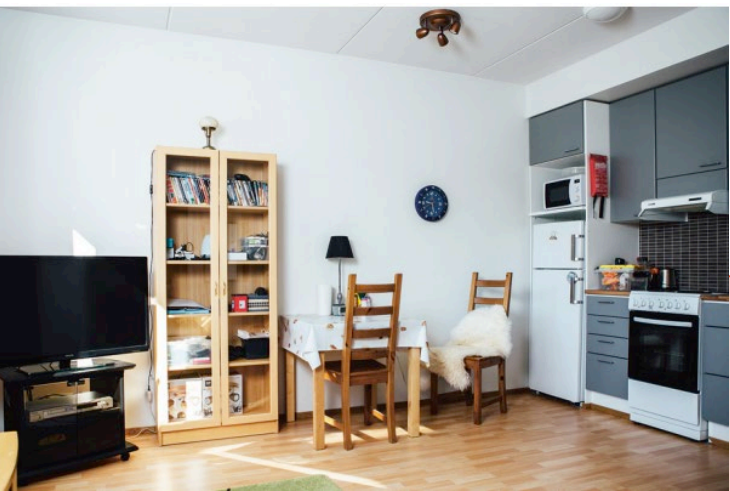
Constitutional
Right to Housing

Transition from
Shelters to
Permanent
Housing

Housing First

Harm Reduction

Low Barrier
Housing



Y Foundation's A Home of Your Own Handbook



FIGURE | Typical Väinölä apartment

Houston's The Way Home Initiative 2012 - Present

UCLA

COMPARING THE COUNTS: 2011 - 2022



- 62% decrease in homelessness since 2011
- 25,000 people have been housed to date
- Declared an effective end to Veteran homelessness

Houston's The Way Home Initiative 2012 - Present

UCLA

Housing First

Harm
Reduction

Low Barrier
Housing

Houston's The Way Home Initiative

2012 - Present

UCLA

Housing First

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Low Barrier
Housing

System
Coordination

Data-driven
Approaches

Partnerships
with Landlords

Figure 1. System Access Prior to The Way Home

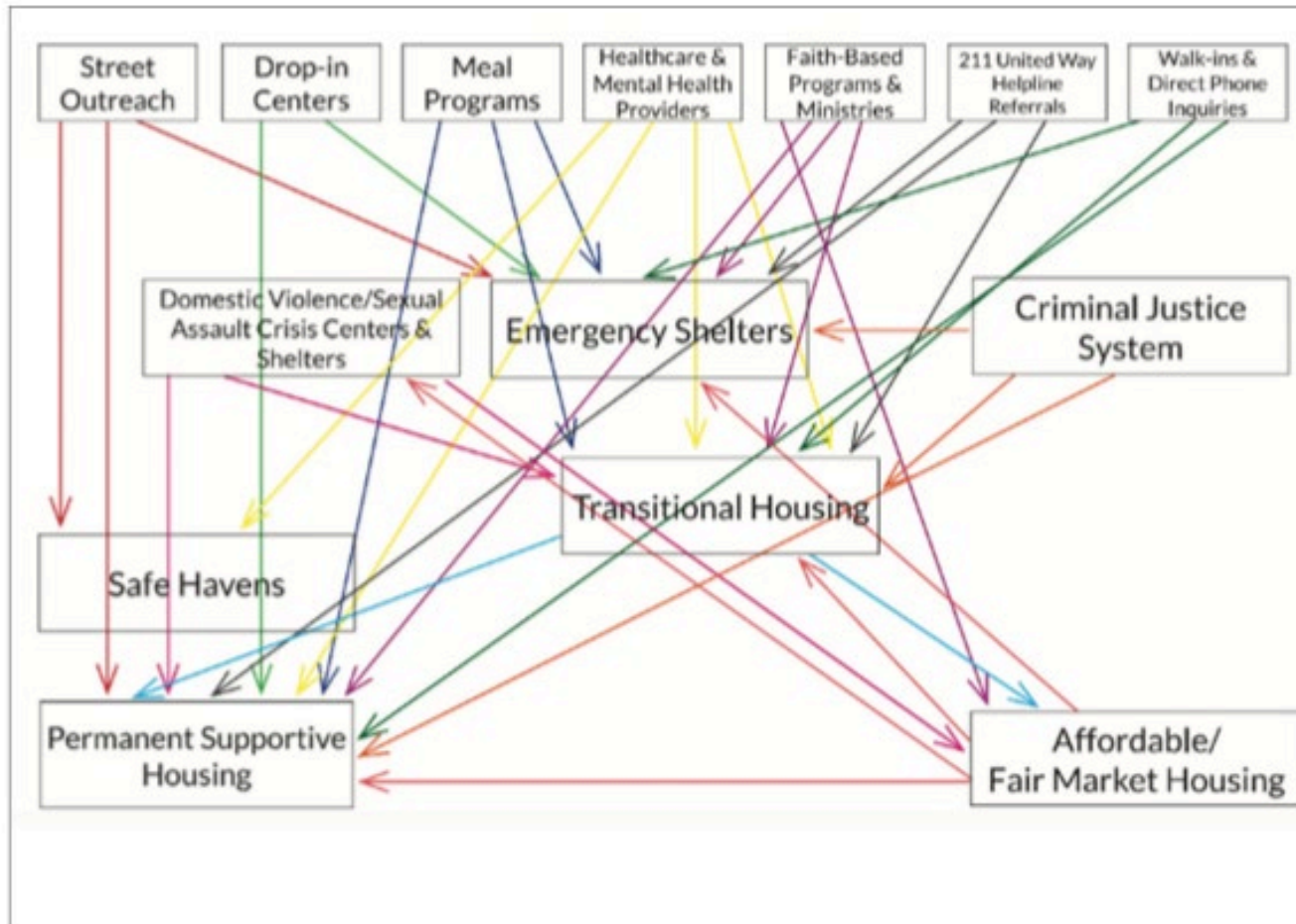
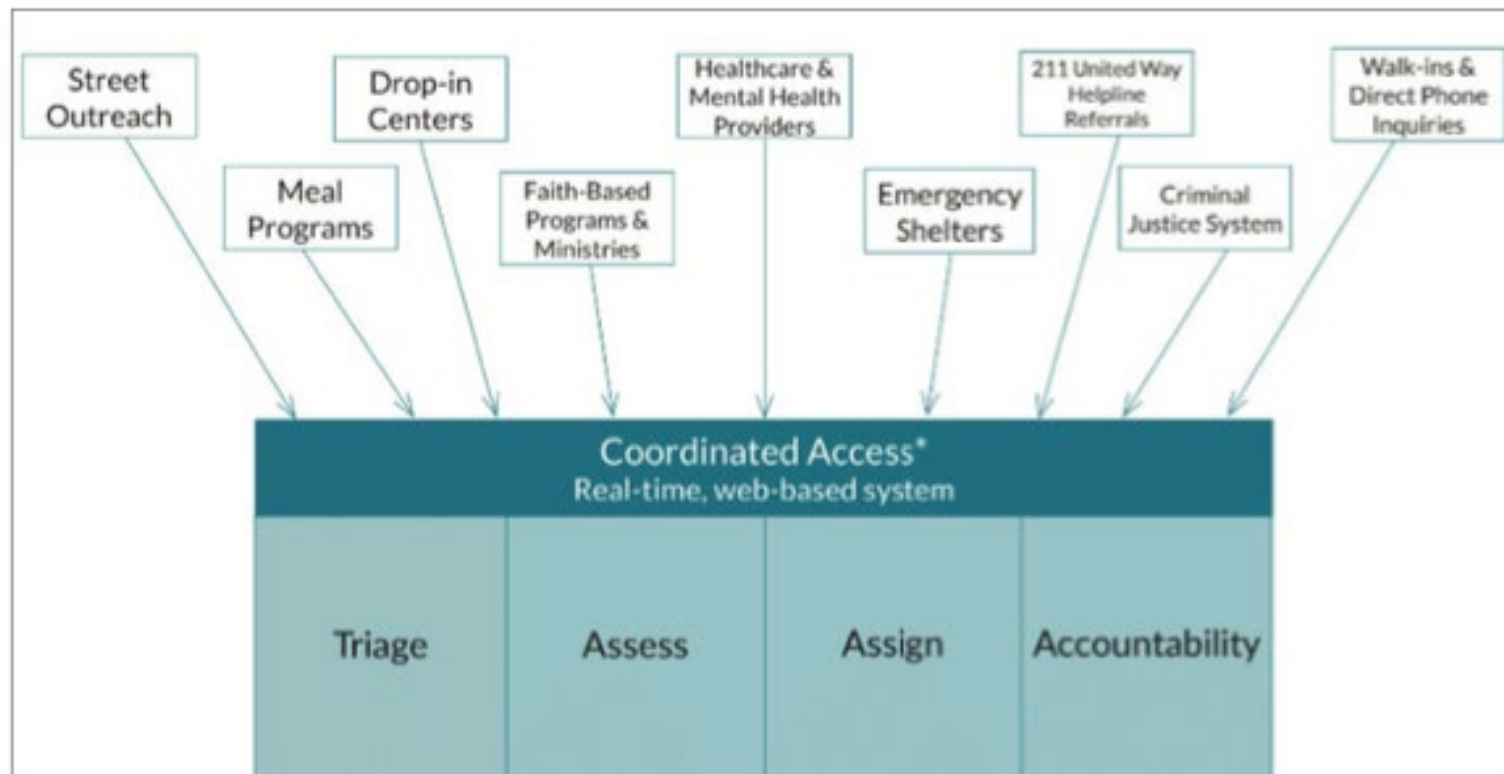


Figure 3. System Impact After Implementing The Way Home Design



Houston's The Way Home Initiative

2012 - Present

UCLA

Housing First

Harm
Reduction

Low Barrier
Housing

System
Coordination

Data-driven
Approaches

Partnerships
with Landlords

Houston's The Way Home Initiative

2012 - Present



The Way Home's
Community Plan
to End
Homelessness



How should we do homeless outreach?

How do you prioritize housing?

How should housing be designed?

What rules should be in place at housing sites?

Critical Time Intervention

Susser E. Am J Public Health. 1997;87: 256-262.

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Vulnerability Indices

Currie J, et al. PLoS One. 2021;16(7): e0254100.

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Trauma-informed design

Shipworks Architecture

What rules should be in place at housing sites?

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Trauma-informed design

Shipworks Architecture

Community Resilient, Trauma Resilient Property Management

Preservation of Affordable Housing

Housing First or Treatment First?

Housing First or sobriety first?

Congregate PSH or Scatter-site PSH?

Housing First

Tsai J & Rosenheck RA. Adm Policy Ment Health. 2011 May;38(3):142-54

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Tsemberis S. *Am J Public Health*. 2004;94:651–656

Edens EL, Rosenheck RA. *Psychiatric Services* 62:171–178, 2011

Both – housing choice is essential

Siegel CE, Hopper K, et al. *Psychiatric Services* 57:982–991, 2006



Services without housing can harm rather than help



How a commune-like encampment in Echo Park became a flashpoint in L.A.'s homelessness crisis



Los Angeles Daily News

After a 'rough three days,' last two residents of homeless encampment at Echo Park are arrested

Los Angeles Times

It's the endgame for the Echo Park homeless encampment



Services without housing can harm rather than help

HOW LOS ANGELES CREATED THE PLAYBOOK FOR A NATIONWIDE WAR ON THE UNHOUSED

THE APPEAL

As politicians look to build public support for homeless encampment sweeps, they're using tactics popularized in LA—the site of one of the nation's most intense battles over the unhoused.

**(DIS)PLACEMENT:
THE FIGHT FOR HOUSING AND
COMMUNITY AFTER ECHO PARK LAKE**

Unhoused and unequal: a California crisis

One year after LA evicted the unhoused from a park, few are in stable housing

The Guardian



UCLA LUSKIN INSTITUTE ON
INEQUALITY AND DEMOCRACY
ORGANIZED 2016

Enrico Castillo

One-year Later

Promise

- Echo Park Lake displacement would be a model for housing and services, that **“all 193 displaced residents will be placed in stable, permanent housing within a year.”** (Deputy Mayor for City Homelessness Initiatives, Jose Ramirez, April 7, 2021)

**(DIS)PLACEMENT:
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Reality

- Of “183 people who were on the official Echo Park Lake placements list, **only 17 have been placed in what we classify to be housing.**”

**(DIS)PLACEMENT:
THE FIGHT FOR HOUSING AND
COMMUNITY AFTER ECHO PARK LAKE**



City Installs New Tents at Pico Campsite; Homeless Asked to Provide Proof of San Clemente Residency

 The Bakersfield Californian

Inside Kern County's plan to reduce homelessness by jailing misdemeanor drug offenses

The city of Bakersfield has entered negotiations with the court for deputies ... Under the proposition, possession of drugs like Both the county and city hope that a stint in jail will prompt so 1 month ago

 Los Angeles Times

L.A. City Council reimposes bans on living in vehicles

Sleeping overnight in cars, vans and RVs will be prohibited again in many parts of Los Angeles, after the City Council voted Tuesday to ...



 Los Angeles Times

Editorial: L.A. might ban the homeless from sleeping near schools or parks. Where will they go?

Editorial: L.A. might ban the homeless from sleeping near schools or parks? ... Under the proposed revisions, a person sleeping near a school or daycare center.

Aug 31, 2019

 Los Angeles Times

Protests erupt at L.A. City Hall over sidewalk sleeping rules

Protests and debate erupt at City Hall ... called to end the criminalization of homeless people and roll back rules that bar sleeping on sidewalks.

1 month ago



Mental Health Services Can Overshadow Structural Reforms to Address Homelessness

UCLA

California Moves to Set up Gov. Newsom's New 'CARE' Courts for Mentally Ill on Streets by CalMatters September 11, 2022

TIMES
of SAN DIEGO

California's Fight Against Homelessness Has Turned Desperate and Dangerous

The New York Times

JAY CASPIAN KANG

Mental Health Services Can Overshadow Structural Reforms to Address Homelessness

UCLA

Will CARE Court solve homelessness in California?

abc10

Gov. Newsom Signs CARE Court, Paves New Path for Conservatorships Over Homeless People VOICE^{of} OC

smdp
Santa Monica Daily Press

Could Newsom's new mental health court be a fix for local homelessness?

Fontana
Herald News
Your Community. Your Newspaper.

Mayor says: The real solution to homelessness is CARE Court

© Enrico Castillo

More housing isn't the solution to homelessness — it's treatment

By Michele Steeb

NEW YORK POST

July 15, 2022 | 5:31pm | Updated

Giving people housing won't solve homelessness. Treating their mental health and substance use disorders will.



Dave Marlon

October 21st, 2021 at 2:00 AM

Opinion



The **NEVADA INDEPENDENT**

WA's broken mental health system and homelessness crisis are inextricably tied

The Seattle Times

The problem of homelessness is all too often not a housing problem, but a mental health/substance abuse/housing problem. Homelessness will not be solved if the mental health problems of those who are homeless are not addressed.

'Street psychiatrists' help unhoused Angelenos access mental health care

By Zoie Matthew • Sep. 14, 2022

HOMELESSNESS

Viewpoint

JAMA Psychiatry

January 29, 2020

Psychiatry on the Streets—Caring for Homeless Patients

A Street Psychiatry Rotation for Medical Trainees: Humanizing the Care of People Experiencing Homelessness

“How a doctor cares for Boston’s homeless”

NY Times Magazine, January 5, 2023

"We're way down on the solution scale." Housing wasn't just complicated. He found that if he mused too long about the problem, on the forces ranged against great progress and the disagreements among allies, he grew hungry for the clinic, his colleagues, his patients. **"I don't get despairing," he told me. "But it's much easier to just go take care of people."** For all its limitations, that work felt full and rich and edifying, and real. **Some allies in the struggle against homelessness criticized the Program for using resources that should have gone to housing. O'Connell's reply was plain: "This is what we do while we're waiting for the world to change."**

Haggerty told me, "Jim is doing exactly what he should." Medicine alone couldn't solve homelessness, she said. "This is really about accountability, system design, performance. **Until that's fixed, Jim is basically standing at the bottom of a cliff, trying to save people."**

Correct misinformation about the unhoused

- The majority of unhoused individuals have neither mental illness nor SUDs

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Acknowledge the limitations of our services

- We cannot treat or hospitalize our way out of homelessness

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Advocate for structural remedies to homelessness

- Resist the co-opting of our services by policy leaders

Services for unhoused populations

should be cautious about:

1. Unintended overshadowing of structural solutions to homelessness
2. Perpetuation of misinformation and stigma
3. Complicity in the criminalization of homelessness

Should build into their work:

1. Permanent housing as the ultimate metric for success
2. Public education, especially for policymakers
3. Advocacy, partnerships, and empowerment

CA's Constitution Article 34

1950 CA voters add Article 34 to the state constitution

“No low rent housing project shall hereafter be developed, constructed, or acquired...by any state public body until, a majority of the qualified electors of the city, town or county...in which it is proposed...approve such project by voting in ... an election.”

A market-rate housing project being constructed at 1st and Alamitos in Downtown Long Beach. Photo by Brian Addison.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

December 3, 2018

The 'scar on our Constitution' that is Article 34—and why politicians are attempting to repeal it in the name of housing

by Brian Addison in Longbeachize

California needs to build affordable housing. Its racist Article 34 makes that too difficult

Posted on February 8, 2019

A dark side to the California dream: How the state Constitution makes affordable housing hard to build

From the Field: California Legislators and Advocates Move to Repeal NIMBY Provision from State Constitution

Feb 19, 2019

LA
Times

© Enrico Castillo

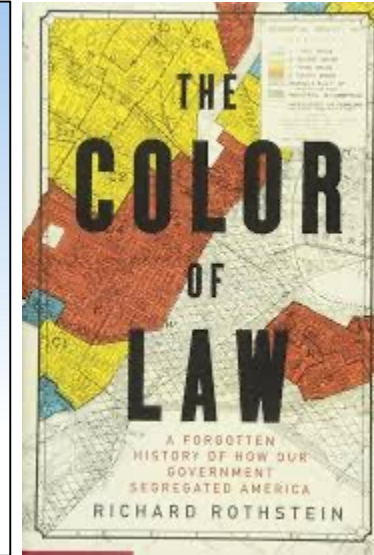
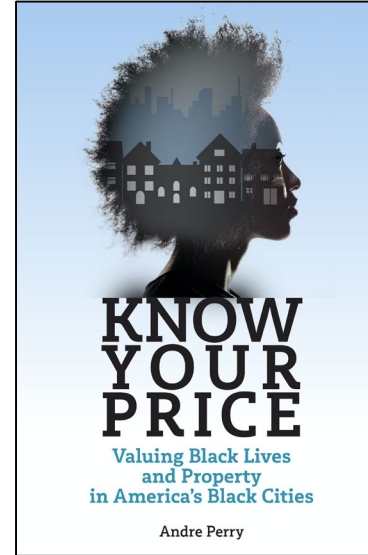
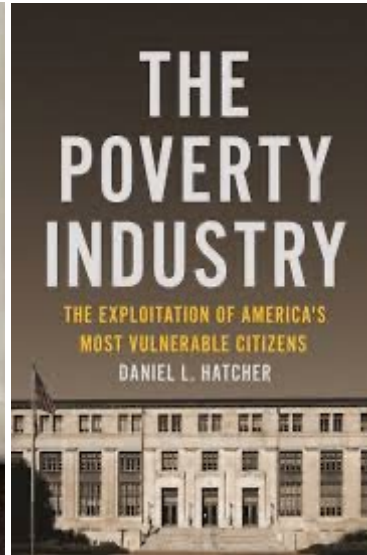
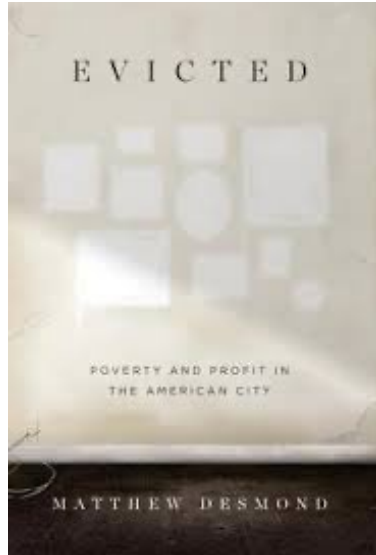
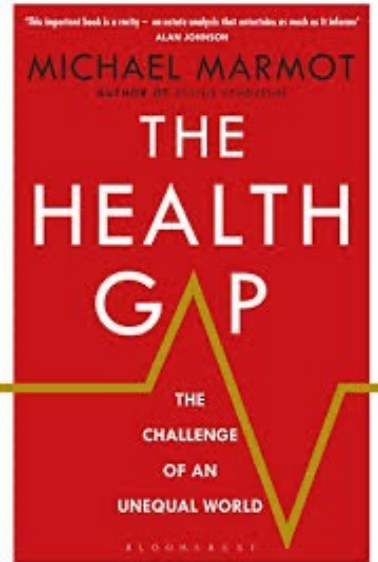
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THANK YOU

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Part 1. Homelessness Is a Structural Problem with Structural Solutions

Housing Supply and Affordability

- Promoting housing construction
- Housing subsidies
- Mixed-income housing policies
- Eliminating single family zoning

Homelessness Prevention

- Renter protections
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Housing and Housing Retention for People Who Are Unhoused

- Decriminalization
- Housing First = permanent housing + intensive services
- Low-demand housing and housing choice
- Non-law enforcement-based outreach services

Marc Eichenbaum on Mental Illness and
Homelessness

Special Assistant to the Mayor of Houston for
Homelessness Initiatives

Prevalence of SMI and SUDs

Sheltered Single Adults, 2010:

- 26.2% had a serious mental illness
- 34.7% had a chronic substance use disorder
- 46% had SMI and/or chronic substance use disorder

Permanent Supportive Housing, 2010:

- Disability due to SMI: 43%
- Disability due to SMI and/or substance abuse problem: 53.4%
- Disability due to general medical condition: 13.2%

Mental illness is a part of homelessness but is far from the whole picture

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2022 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count - Los Angeles County

LA County data includes the Los Angeles Continuum of Care, and the cities of Pasadena, Glendale, and Long Beach. Data from the 2022 Greater Los Angeles Point-In-Time Count estimate the number and demographic characteristics of the homeless population on a single night in February 2022. · Data presented reflect the estimated number of people unless labeled as a household count. · If you have any questions about the data presented, please email datasupport@lahsa.org.



Population	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total	Prevalence in 18+ Homeless Pop. (%)
Substance Use Disorder	1,783	14,648	16,431	26%
HIV/AIDS	335	1,143	1,478	2%
Serious Mental Illness	3,911	11,588	15,499	25%

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POLICY BRIEF

MAY 2022



UCLA

Public Partnership for Wellbeing



CALIFORNIA
POLICY
LAB

Serious Mental Illness among People who are Unsheltered in Los Angeles

COLIN CAPRARA, DEAN OBERMARK, JANEY ROUNTREE, AND ROBERT SANTILLANO

17% of participants had a service for an SMI within 5 years prior to enrollment in street outreach

American Medical Association Journal of Ethics
August 2011, Volume 13, Number 8: 559-564.

POLICY FORUM

Student-Run Clinics—A Short-Term Solution to a Systemic Problem

Erwin C. Wang, MHA, Megan Prior, Jenny M. Van Kirk, Stephen A. Sarmiento,
Margaret M. Burke, MS, Christine Oh, MS, Eileen S. Moore, MD, and Stephen Ray
Mitchell, MD

In Los Angeles

UCLA

This highlights another critical weakness in the current homeless service system. Once a caseworker assesses an individual, their data is put into the county's coordinated entry system to determine eligibility for various housing resources. When that resource becomes available, the caseworker then must re-contact that person to get them into housing.

But the city makes this harder with policies like sanitation sweeps of encampments, which require individuals to move all their belongings or risk losing them. This often prompts unsheltered individuals to move on from a known location, causing delays or a total loss of contact.

Camping Bans and Group Shelters Unlikely to Solve Homelessness Crisis

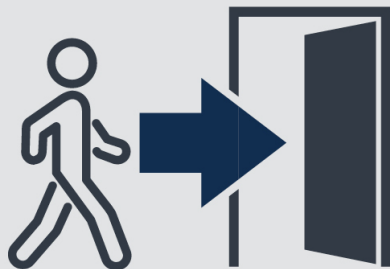
COMMENTARY *(Santa Monica Daily Press)*

by [Sarah B. Hunter](#) and [Jason M. Ward](#)

May 23, 2022

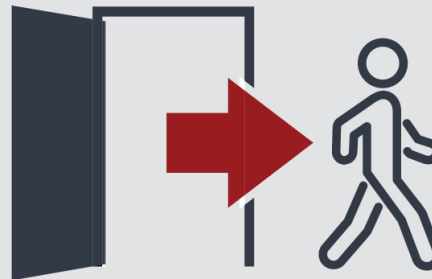
Closing the Door to Homelessness*

Preventing homelessness before it starts is critical to ending it.



908,530

Average who entered
homelessness each year
between 2017 and 2020

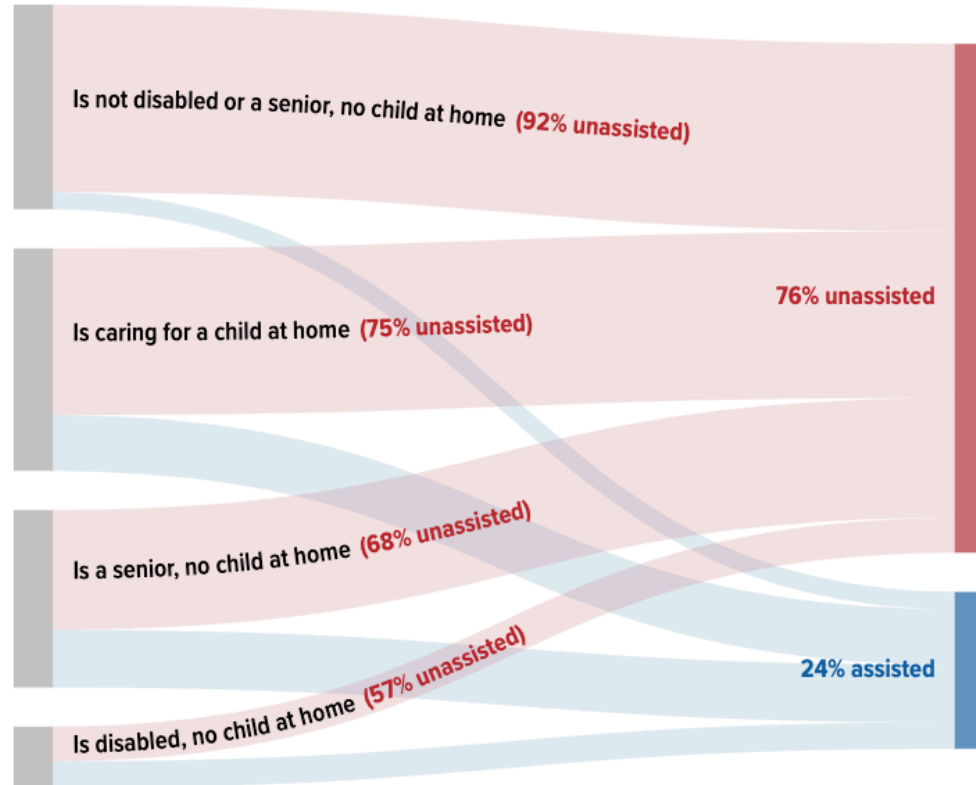


900,895

Average who exited
homelessness each year
between 2017 and 2020

76% of Low-Income Renters Needing Federal Rental Assistance Don't Receive It

Unassisted vs. assisted households, headed by someone who:



Recent Biden-Harris Administration Actions to Prevent Homelessness

Agency/Entity	Policy/Program/Initiative	Action
HHS	<u>Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund</u>	Provided \$1 billion to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program to help families with a range of pandemic-related needs, including support for people behind on rent or experiencing other housing insecurity due to the pandemic
HUD	<u>Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative</u>	Awarded nearly \$15 million to PHAs (in partnership with public child welfare agencies) in Housing Choice Vouchers for 18- to 24-year-olds experiencing or at risk of homelessness who left or will leave foster care within 90 days
HUD	<u>Eviction Protection Grant Program</u>	Awarded \$20 million in first-of-their-kind grants for 10 legal service providers that offer no-cost services to low-income tenants at risk of or subject to eviction in areas—including rural—with high eviction rates
Treasury	<u>Economic Impact Payments</u>	Provided millions in direct cash assistance , also known as stimulus checks, for people experiencing homelessness; <u>Reduced overall poverty</u> by 45% (20.1 million people) in 2021, when combined with state payments

In addition to the actions taken above, the White House convened the **White House Homelessness Prevention Working Group** from October 2021 through January 2022. The following are some of the commitments that were made through that effort.

Recent Biden-Harris Administration Actions to Scale Housing and Supports That Meet Demand

Housing

Agency/Entity	Policy/Program/Initiative	Action
White House	American Rescue Plan Act	Signed in March 2021; includes \$350 billion in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds , \$5 billion for Emergency Housing Vouchers Program , \$5 billion in HOME-ARP grants, \$750 million for Native American and Native Hawaiian programs, and \$21.6 billion for Emergency Rental Assistance Program
White House	Housing Supply Action Plan	Released in May 2022; includes legislative and administrative actions that represent most comprehensive in history to help close America's housing supply shortage in five years
HHS	Brief: Supporting Families Experiencing Homelessness: Strategies and Approaches for TANF Agencies	Summarizes different approaches that TANF agencies can pursue to provide housing and related assistance to families experiencing homelessness
HUD	Tribal HUD-VASH Expansion	Awarded \$4.4 million in grants to 28 tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities , including \$1 million to house 95 additional veterans
HUD	Opportunities to Increase Housing Production and Preservation	Released research on innovative strategies for state and local governments to remove barriers to affordable housing development
Multiple Agencies	Shallow Subsidy Initiative	DOL and VA collaborated to expand Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program and provide \$350 million to grantees, in part from American Rescue Plan
VA	Permanent Housing Placement National Challenge	Set goal to house 38,000 veterans experiencing homelessness in 2022

Mental Health Services Can Overshadow Structural Reforms to Address Homelessness

UCLA

“And while we moved a record 58,000 people off the streets since the beginning of the pandemic, we recognize we have more to do – particularly to address what’s happening on our sidewalks, reaching people who need the help the most.

Those with schizophrenia spectrum and psychosis disorders, many self-medicating with drugs or alcohol addictions.

That’s precisely what our encampment resolution grants and our new **CARE Court seek to address.**

Getting people off the streets, out of tents, and into housing and treatment is essential to making our streets safe for everyone...”

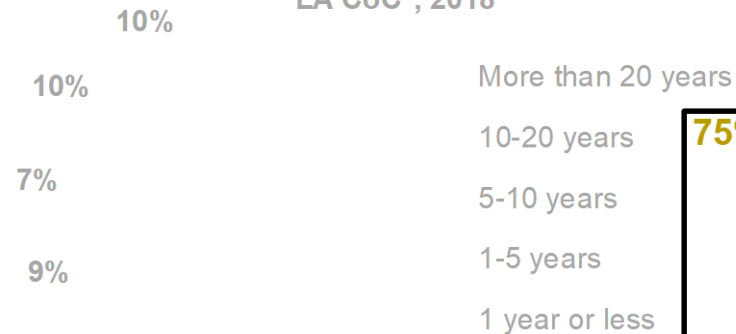
Governor Newsom, State of the State Address, March 2022

LA County Homelessness: Debunking Myths



65% have been in LA County for more than 20 years

Length of Time in LA County, Unsheltered Adults
25+ & Children in Adult Families
LA CoC*, 2018



75% lived in Los Angeles before becoming homeless

Place of Residence Before Becoming Homeless
Unsheltered Persons
LA CoC*, 2018



Houston Homelessness: Debunking Myths

Place First Experienced Homelessness Among Unsheltered Population

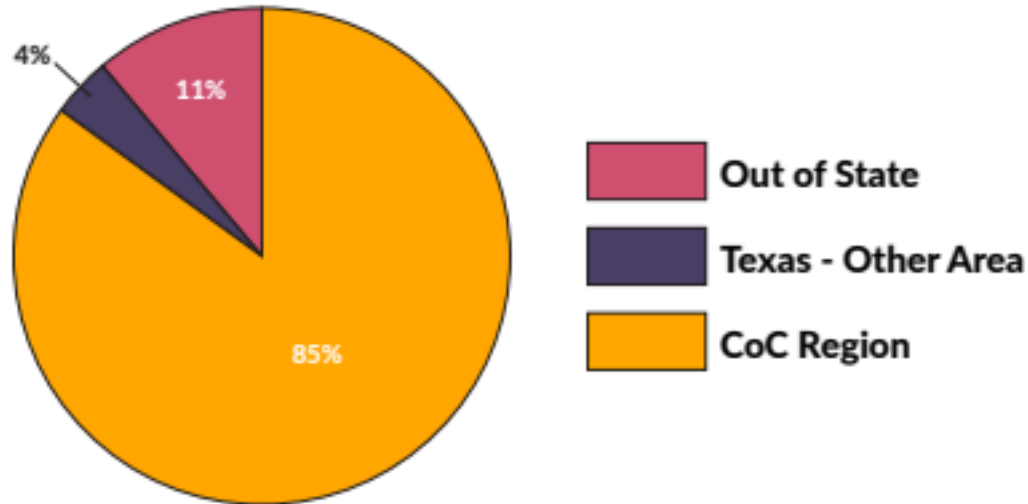


Figure 9

Los Angeles has a growing affordable housing crisis



Los Angeles County needs over **565,000** new affordable housing units for low income renters—**16,000** more than the previous year



Since 2000, median rent in Los Angeles County has increased **32%** while median renter household income has decreased **3%***



Los Angeles County has the highest poverty rate across all counties in the state at nearly **25%****

When accounting for housing costs and cost-of-living, California has the highest poverty rate in the country at over **20%*****

**California Poverty Measure (CPM), a measure developed by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) and the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, average poverty rates from 2013-2015
***US Census Bureau Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), average poverty rates from 2014-2016

Source: California Housing Partnership Corporation. (May 2018). Los Angeles County's Housing Emergency and Proposed Solutions.

*Adjusted for inflation
Source: California Housing Partnership Corporation (May 2017). Los Angeles County Renters in Crisis: A Call for Action.

Houston Homelessness: Debunking Myths

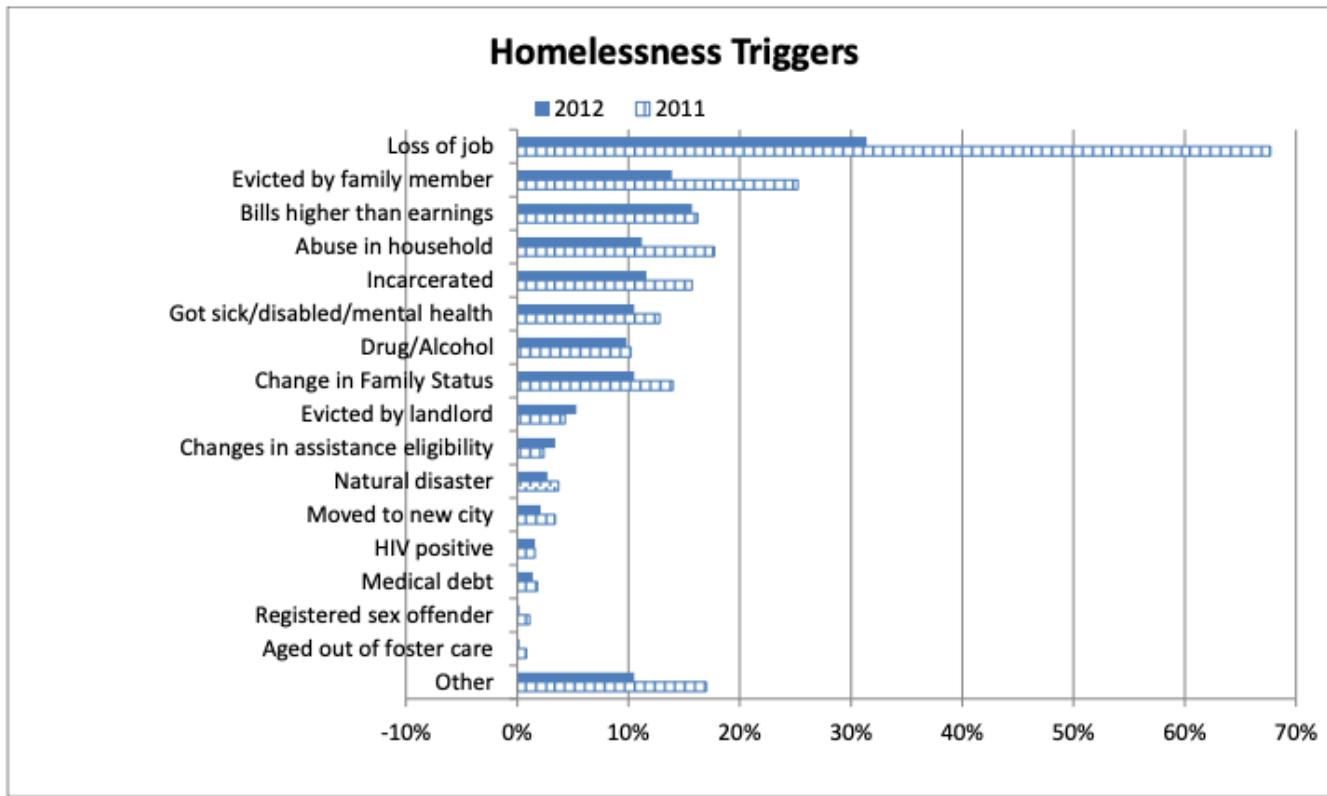


Figure 8: Reasons for Leaving Last Regular Home¹⁷

Shifting away from emergency shelters toward permanent housing

Year	Supported housing	Independent rental apartments	Hostels and shelters
1985	127	65	2,121
2008	552	2,033	558
2016	1,309	2,433	52

Source: Kaakinen 2017

FIGURE | *Housing options for homeless people in Helsinki*

FIGURE | *Where did the money come from during 2012–2015?*

THE HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE OF FINLAND, ARA

22 M€

in investment grants for the modification of shelters and separate projects, among other things

2,2 M€

in housing advice grants

Source: Statistics Finland

“Housing one long-term homeless person saves about 15,000 euros of society’s funds per year”

THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND HEALTH, STM

10 M€

for the wage costs of support staff

FINLAND’S SLOT MACHINE ASSOCIATION, RAY

65 M€

Total contribution to the programme exceeded 65 million euros, of which:

32,3 M€

in housing advice grants

14,5 M€

in investment grants for constructing youth apartments

18,6 M€

in operating grants for development projects, for example

Lessons from Finland and Houston

UCLA

