



PASADENA COC

Homelessness Plan

2024-2028



**Pasadena
Partnership**

Prepared by



CityWise

About the Pasadena CoC

The Pasadena Continuum of Care (CoC), formally known as the Pasadena Partnership, is a collaborative network of nonprofit organizations, government agencies, faith-based organizations, advocates, and system partners. At the heart of its work lies a commitment to evidence-based strategies with the ultimate goal of making homelessness in Pasadena rare, brief, and non-recurring. By utilizing the latest research and data, the CoC strives to deliver effective solutions that provide individuals and families who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness with housing, supportive services, and essential resources.

The Pasadena CoC is one of over 400 designated Continuums of Care nationally that receive federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In recent years, this has also evolved to include direct funding from the state and Los Angeles County. Since 1995, the CoC has served as the primary planning entity responsible for addressing the housing and service needs of people experiencing homelessness. The CoC is led by a Board that is elected by the CoC's members, which serves as the primary decision-making body for system-level priorities, resource allocation and local program policies. Current members of the CoC board include:

- Will Watts, Coalition for the Homeless
- Dan Davidson, Coffee with a Cause
- Tammy Marashlian, United Way of Greater Los Angeles
- Cory Patterson, Union Station Homeless Services Lived Expertise Advisory Panel (LEAP)
- Sieglinde von Deffner, LA County Department of Health Services Housing for Health
- Amara Ononiwu, Faith Collaborative to End Homelessness (FCEH)
- Treasure Sheppard, Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA)
- Jennifer O'Reilly-Jones, City of Pasadena, Non-Voting Member

CityWise

CityWise is a woman-owned policy, planning, and evaluation consulting firm specializing in improving systems of care for people experiencing homelessness. With over a decade of experience in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, CityWise is dedicated to creating positive change in communities. By integrating the latest research and data and collaborating closely with local communities, CityWise develops tailored solutions rooted in evidence-based approaches that effectively address the unique needs of each community. Learn more about CityWise and its mission to improve the lives of those experiencing homelessness at www.citywise.co.

Thank You!

The Pasadena CoC would like to thank the 400+ community stakeholders, people with lived experience of homelessness, and organizations for their valuable input and participation in the plan development. For a full list of organizations that participated in the process, see the Acknowledgments section.

Approved February 29, 2024



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A Problem We Can Solve

Homelessness is a crisis for those without homes and their families and communities. It can lead to a range of health problems, including chronic health conditions, mental illness, and substance use, all of which contribute to a shorter lifespan for people who are unhoused. Historic, structural, and systemic racism have resulted in people of color, particularly Black, Hispanic, and Latino people, being overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness in Pasadena. This overrepresentation is exacerbated by biases, prejudices, and overt discrimination that impacts who successfully achieves stable housing.

Homelessness also impacts the broader community, contributing to social and economic inequality and straining public resources such as healthcare, emergency services, and social services. The visibility of homelessness in communities can lead to negative attitudes toward our unhoused neighbors, perpetuating stereotypes and stigma, further marginalizing people experiencing homelessness, and creating barriers to finding stable housing and employment.

Ending homelessness in Pasadena requires making it rare, brief, and non-recurring. The Pasadena CoC's Homelessness Plan is a critical step towards this end, providing a roadmap for action. However, collective action from the community is essential for its success. While Pasadena has made progress in reducing homelessness over the past ten years, recent increases in homelessness locally, regionally, and across the country demonstrate the ongoing need for action.

This Plan outlines an ambitious objective of reducing homelessness by 50% by 2029, and targeted action is needed to achieve this goal. It requires additional investments in permanent housing, including 150 units, along with targeted improvements to the CoC's housing and support systems to ensure each element of the system is working together to reduce homelessness.

To achieve significant reductions in homelessness, it is crucial to address disparities among people who are experiencing it, particularly Black, Indigenous,

and people of color (BIPOC). Elevating, learning from, and rallying behind BIPOC leaders in our community is essential to ensuring equity within the homeless service system of care. These leaders need the support of the entire community to implement strategies aimed at addressing existing disparities and discrimination, including discrimination against Black people in the private rental market and inequities in access to homeless services. It is important to acknowledge the historical and systemic factors that have led to these disparities and work towards rectifying them through intentional and sustained efforts toward equitable policies and practices.

Meaningful reductions in homelessness also depend upon reducing inflows to homelessness by 15%. Achieving this goal requires the collective action of our community. We need to support tenants facing housing insecurity by targeting financial assistance to those who are most at risk of homelessness while enacting stronger tenant protections. We also need stronger support for people exiting institutions, including hospitals, correctional facilities, and other facilities, to ensure housing stability.

While working towards advancing permanent housing solutions, it is essential to strengthen support for our unhoused neighbors in the interim. Additional emergency shelter beds are urgently needed to help bring our unhoused neighbors indoors, including adding 70 shelter beds by 2028 to ensure there are enough beds to shelter 80% of people experiencing homelessness on any given night.

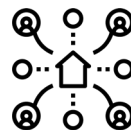
Ultimately, we all have a role to play in ending homelessness in Pasadena. It's time to come together as a community and take action to make a real difference in the lives of our unhoused neighbors. By implementing the Pasadena CoC Homelessness Plan, we can build effective and lasting systems to end homelessness and create a more equitable and just community for all.

INTRODUCTION

The Pasadena Continuum of Care (CoC) Homelessness Plan creates an initial framework and sets aggressive goals for reducing homelessness in Pasadena over the next five years. Reaching these goals will require the collective action of the community around proven, evidence-based strategies and innovative approaches that maximize available resources. Founded on the commitment to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-re-

curring, this Plan aims to establish an equitable, accessible, and compassionate system for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The plan was developed with input from more than 415 stakeholders and subject matter experts, which are detailed in the Acknowledgments section. This Plan is built around five action areas.

Homelessness Plan Action Areas



SYSTEMWIDE PLANNING

The Systemwide Planning action area involves strengthening the current system to prevent and end homelessness through collaboration and coordination with all stakeholders, from government agencies to service providers and individuals with lived experience.



EQUITY & RESPECT

The Equity & Respect action area focuses on ensuring that the system is inclusive and sensitive to the needs and experiences of all people experiencing homelessness and offers strategies to address existing disparities in Pasadena.



CRISIS RESPONSE

The Crisis Response action area involves providing emergency services and supports to people experiencing homelessness, such as emergency shelter, outreach, and essential services.



HOUSING & SUPPORTS

The Housing & Supports action area includes providing permanent housing solutions and supportive services using the Housing First model, which prioritizes the provision of permanent housing as quickly as possible, without any preconditions such as sobriety, service participation, or minimum income requirements.



PREVENTION

The Prevention action area focuses on improving policies, practices, and interventions to reduce the likelihood of our neighbors losing their housing.

Five-Year Goals

As part of the broader planning process, the CoC has set the following quantitative targets to achieve by 2029:



Systemwide

50% reduction in annual homelessness



Equity + Respect

Parity in access and outcomes for marginalized groups compared to other participants

Parity in lease-up and retention rates for Black participants
Parity in access for Hispanic and Latino participants



Crisis Response

Year-round shelter beds for 80% of people who are unhoused on any given night



Housing & Supports

1,110 people permanently housed



Prevention

15% reduction in inflows

Achieving these targets will require investment in 150 additional units of permanent housing and 70 new shelter beds over the next five years. The CoC will re-assess inflows regularly and update projections accordingly if needed based on the changing landscape.

Measuring Progress

The Pasadena CoC's commitment to data-driven processes is a critical component of its homelessness plan. Progress toward the plan's goals will be closely monitored through regular data-driven assessments to ensure that strategies remain relevant and effective. This commitment to ongoing evaluation and improvement is essential for addressing the complex and evolving issue of homelessness. Specific metrics, such as reductions in inflows, annual homelessness, and emergency shelter inventory, will be used to measure progress. Additionally, the CoC will conduct disparity analyses to assess the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, disability, gender, and age within the homeless response system, ensuring equitable access and delivery of services for marginalized groups. By regularly measuring progress in these areas, the CoC can adjust its strategies and targets as needed to ensure that they are effectively addressing the needs of the community.



Guiding Principles

The Pasadena CoC homeless response system is anchored by a set of guiding principles that serve as the foundation for all aspects of its work. These principles are fundamental to the CoC’s commitment to making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. By adhering to these principles, the CoC ensures that the response is guided by a clear understanding of the issue and the most effective ways to address it.



HOUSING FIRST

Stable housing is the foundation upon which people build their lives. Absent a safe, decent, affordable place to live, it is next to impossible to achieve good health, positive educational outcomes, or reach one’s economic potential. Therefore, the CoC is fully committed to the Housing First philosophy, an evidence-based approach that prioritizes providing people with permanent housing as quickly as possible, without any preconditions such as sobriety, service participation, or minimum income requirements. By prioritizing housing as a foundational need, the Housing First approach aims to provide people with the stability they need to address other challenges they may face. Once housed, participants receive optional supportive services to help maintain their housing and address any ongoing needs. Services include case management and linkages to community resources.



EQUITY CENTERED

Systemic inequities and discrimination often intersect and compound each other, leading to even greater disparities in homelessness among certain populations, including Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), people with disabilities, people who identify as LGBTQ+, and survivors of domestic violence. The Pasadena CoC recognizes the importance of addressing these disparities and is committed to providing targeted support to marginalized communities. To achieve this goal, the CoC ensured that people who have experienced homelessness and representatives from marginalized groups were involved in all elements of the homelessness planning process. Strategies for addressing disparities in Pasadena were developed using ongoing disparity analyses and best practices.



TRAUMA-INFORMED

For people experiencing homelessness, trauma is often a significant factor in their lives, whether due to experience of abuse, neglect, violence, or other adverse experiences. The CoC is committed to providing trauma-informed care, which involves creating a safe and supportive environment that takes into account the potential trauma and triggers that people may be experiencing. This includes practices such as active listening, being aware of potential triggers for trauma, providing choices and control wherever possible, and supporting people in building resilience and coping skills. By addressing the trauma that many individuals have faced, people are supported in rebuilding their lives.



FUNCTIONAL ZERO

The Pasadena CoC is committed to achieving functional zero, meaning that the number of people experiencing homelessness at any given time does not exceed the community's proven record of housing at least that many people in a month. Essentially, functional zero is the state in which homelessness is rare and brief. Achieving this goal requires a multifaceted approach, including prevention, detection, and resolution. This means having systems in place that can prevent homelessness from occurring in the first place, as well as quickly detect homelessness when it does occur. It also means ensuring that incidents of homelessness are permanently and promptly resolved through access to affordable housing, support services, and other resources.



HARM REDUCTION

Homelessness can present many challenges for those experiencing it, including substance use and mental health issues. To address these barriers, the CoC has committed to a harm reduction approach, which prioritizes the safety and well-being of people by reducing the negative consequences associated with various behaviors or situations. This approach acknowledges that homelessness itself can be a significant source of harm and aims to reduce negative consequences by providing access to stable housing, healthcare, and other resources. By focusing on harm reduction, individuals experiencing homelessness can receive support without judgment or stigma.



SYSTEMS LEVEL PLANNING

Ending homelessness requires an all-hands-on-deck response, with a coordinated effort from all stakeholders. Homelessness is a complex issue that cannot be addressed through a single intervention or program. Rather, it requires a comprehensive approach that addresses multiple factors and the failures of existing systems, including lack of affordable housing, poverty, mental health and substance use disorders, trauma, and systemic inequities. People experiencing homelessness often interact with multiple systems outside of homeless services, including housing, healthcare, criminal justice, social services, and education. Each of these systems has its own set of policies, procedures, and priorities, which can create silos and make it difficult to provide holistic support to people who are unhoused. Therefore, coordination and collaboration with these systems are vital to ensure comprehensive and effective support for people experiencing homelessness.

How This Plan was Created

The Homelessness Plan is the result of a robust community engagement process, including input from people with lived experience of homelessness, representatives from marginalized groups, service providers, key stakeholders, regional and cross-system partners, and community members.

Community Engagement and Gaps Analysis

A needs assessment to inform the Homelessness Plan action areas and strategies took place during the summer of 2022. The process for completing the needs assessment was carried out by CityWise and Public Policy Associates and consisted of community engagement as well as a quantitative gaps analysis.

People with lived experience of homelessness informed the needs assessment through eight focus groups. These groups included people who have experienced chronic homelessness; veterans; families; transitional-aged youth (TAY); domestic violence survivors; older adults ages 55+; Black, Indigenous, and people of color (including Hispanic and Latino English speakers); and Hispanic and Latino Spanish speakers.

Feedback from regional and system partners was collected in nine targeted interviews. Partners included the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, Pasadena Community College, the Pasadena Unified School District, leaders in healthcare and mental healthcare, the local probation office, leaders in foster care, and the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS).

Key stakeholders offered feedback in nine listening sessions. These groups included the CoC Board, the CoC at large, the CoC Healthcare Committee, the CoC Faith Community Committee, and citywide commissions, including the Human Services Commission, the Northwest Commission, the Accessibility & Disability Commission, the Status of Women Commission, and the Planning Commission.

Feedback from the community at large was received through an online survey. This survey received 216 responses, the majority of which were from service providers or advocates (43%) and community members (30%).

Finally, a quantitative gaps analysis was conducted that included an analysis of systemwide performance, program outcomes, current and projected CoC capacity, current and projected funding, and a racial disparity analysis.

A complete set of findings and recommendations can be found in the CoC's Homelessness Plan [Community Engagement & Gaps Analysis Summary Report](#). People with lived experience of homelessness, service providers, regional and system partners, and community members all articulated a similar sentiment: meaningful progress and reductions in homelessness depend upon an adequate supply of permanent, affordable housing in Pasadena.

Development of Homelessness Plan Goals and Strategies

The Community Engagement & Gaps Analysis was used to identify the needs and gaps in the CoC's homeless response system. Based on these findings, a set of draft goals were developed and presented to the CoC Board and five City commissions. Commission members were given the opportunity to provide input on the draft goals, and recommendations for areas to be prioritized were taken into consideration. Participating commissions included the Human Services Commission, the Northwest Commission, the

Accessibility & Disability Commission, the Status of Women Commission, and the Planning Commission.

Following this, planning workgroups were established around the five action areas identified in the plan: Systemwide Planning, Equity and Respect, Crisis Response, Housing and Supports, and Prevention. Each workgroup consisted of core members who were supported by subject matter experts in select meetings. Diverse stakeholder perspectives were integrated into the discussions, including people with lived experience of homelessness, representatives from marginalized groups (including but not limited to Black people, Hispanic and Latino people, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+, and DV survivors), service providers, key stakeholders, regional and cross-system partners, and community members. The Systemwide Planning and Equity and Respect workgroups convened over a series of four two-hour meetings, while the Crisis Response, Housing and Supports, and Prevention workgroups each held three two-hour meetings.

PASADENA COC

Homelessness Plan

2024-2028

The Pasadena CoC Homelessness Plan is a crucial and comprehensive effort to reduce homelessness in the community and provide sustainable, long-term housing solutions for the city's unhoused neighbors. It directly addresses the findings of the Community Engagement & Gaps Analysis Report and was informed through the collaborative efforts of five workgroups organized around five action areas: System-wide Planning, Equity and Respect, Crisis Response, Housing and Supports, and Prevention. The Plan sets specific goals for each action area and provides a detailed set of strategies to achieve them.

The Plan is designed to be adaptable and responsive to changing conditions and priorities. It will be regularly evaluated and updated as needed to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. Key components and a timeline, lead, and funding implications for each strategy are summarized in the Implementation Plan.

The Plan's goals and strategies provide a roadmap for success and create meaningful and positive change in the lives of people experiencing homelessness. The Plan underscores the CoC's commitment to building a more equitable and inclusive community, where all individuals have access to safe, stable, and affordable housing, and where the most vulnerable residents among us are protected and supported.



SYSTEMWIDE PLANNING

Ending homelessness in Pasadena will require the united efforts of the entire community to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. The Systemwide Planning action area consists of five strategies that create a comprehensive, sustainable approach to addressing homelessness by leveraging resources, tackling affordable housing shortages and mental health service gaps, and empowering the community to actively participate in finding solutions.

Strategies to support systemwide planning were developed in collaboration with the Systemwide Planning Workgroup, which consisted of experts and stakeholders from diverse backgrounds, including leaders in homeless services, advocates, regional and system partners, and affordable housing developers. From January through March of 2023, these experts came together to share their knowledge and perspectives, making valuable contributions to the development of the strategies outlined below. For a complete list of workgroup members, please refer to the Acknowledgments section.

Strategy 1: Address System Needs

The homelessness plan's ambitious goals will require collective investments in several key areas. Specifically, 150 additional units of permanent housing, 70 new shelter beds, and an online resource center will be necessary. To increase the supply of permanent housing, the CoC will need to implement two new permanent supportive housing projects, a rapid rehousing program, and scattered-site permanent supportive housing. To address the need for additional shelter beds, the CoC will need to maintain 10 motel vouchers annually and develop two new 30-bed emergency shelters. Finally, an online resource center will be established to streamline access to the coordinated entry system, prevention resources, and emergency shelter, improving connections to essential services for the homeless community.

1a: Invest in 150 additional units of permanent housing

Within the City, there are approximately 677 permanent housing beds, consisting of 467 permanent supportive housing units, 101 rapid rehousing units, and 109 units of other permanent housing (Pasadena CoC, 2023). To

successfully reduce homelessness in Pasadena by 50% over the next five years, systems improvements must be coupled with aggressive measures to increase the development of and access to permanent housing programs. These include the creation of new permanent supportive housing site-based projects as well as vouchers that can be used in the private rental market for scattered-site permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing. To increase the supply of permanent housing, the following strategies will be implemented:

- ▶ **Develop new permanent supportive housing site-based projects (90 units).** Site-based permanent supportive housing plays a crucial role in eliminating barriers and discrimination that participants may face in the private rental market. On-site supportive services reduce barriers to access for participants, especially people with high service needs. To ensure a 50% reduction in homelessness, an additional 90 units of permanent housing must be developed and leased up by 2028. Potential opportunities for fulfilling these needs include reserving a portion of units at the proposed Ramona Senior Housing Project for permanent supportive housing. Potential funding sources for capital expenditures to develop other new projects include the newly formed Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Regional Housing Trust Fund and the City's allocation of federal "HOME" program monies, and project-based Housing Choice Vouchers, commonly known as Section 8, which provide ongoing subsidies to clients.
- ▶ **Dedicate 45 new vouchers to scattered-site permanent housing.** In addition to developing a new permanent supportive housing project, the CoC will need 45 new vouchers for scattered-site permanent housing, translating to 15 vouchers annually starting in 2026. The scattered-site model provides financial assistance that can be used in the private rental market and access to optional supportive services to ensure housing retention. This model allows participants to choose housing that best fits their unique needs and helps them fully integrate into the community — an essential factor in helping people to remain housed.
- ▶ **Fund a new 15-household rapid re-housing program.** In addition to increasing permanent supportive housing for people experiencing chronic homelessness, investment in rapid rehousing programs that support lower-acuity households is needed. Specifically, a new rapid rehousing program designed to serve 15 households will need to be fully funded and leased up by 2028. Potential funding for this project includes bonus funding through HUD's CoC program competition.

1b: Invest in 70 new year-round emergency shelter beds

Over the past three years, the Pasadena CoC has seen a significant reduction in shelter beds, fueled largely by the closure of facility-based shelters during the pandemic and the loss of seasonal shelter beds. In 2020, there were 293 shelter beds, but by 2022, the number had decreased by 32% to just 199. The closure of the Bad Weather Shelter, which could accommodate up to 100 individuals during inclement weather, played a major role in this reduction.

While one-time block grants have helped mitigate some of the losses during the pandemic by providing motel vouchers, the funding will be expiring and the CoC now faces a substantial reduction in shelter resources, despite a persistent need for additional beds. In order to meet the goal of providing shelter for 80% of individuals experiencing homelessness on any given night by 2028, the CoC has identified a need for an additional 70 shelter beds.

To maximize the impact of these new beds, the CoC has prioritized ensuring they are available year-round, as shelter programs with longer stays have been shown to be more successful in facilitating participants' transition to permanent housing (Pasadena CoC, 2023). By increasing the supply of year-round shelter beds, the CoC aims to help more individuals experiencing homelessness move towards stability and housing security.

In building these beds, the CoC will prioritize non-congregate shelter models, such as motel vouchers, a motel conversion, or tiny homes, which are essential in ensuring dignity, individual space, and flexibility for people

experiencing homelessness, including multi-adult households. These models provide private and personal spaces, allowing people to maintain autonomy and privacy. They also offer dedicated areas for rest and personal activities, fostering stability and a sense of security. Furthermore, non-congregate shelters accommodate multi-adult and nontraditional households, promoting cohesion during times of housing instability.

To increase the supply of emergency shelter beds, the following actions will be taken:

- ▶ **Maintain 20 year-round motel vouchers** once emergency pandemic and county Measure H funding has ended. Although the primary purpose of new motel voucher programs was to protect highly vulnerable people from COVID-19, these programs have played an important role in allowing additional client shelter choice options, as well as longer shelter stays, resulting in higher exits to permanent housing. The Pasadena CoC will work with providers to ensure that at least 20 motel vouchers are available on an ongoing basis for people seeking shelter.
- ▶ **Develop two new 25-bed emergency shelters.** In addition to increasing capacity at existing shelters, the CoC will need two new 25-bed emergency shelters to replace losses incurred during the pandemic and ensure 80% of people experiencing homelessness on a given night have access to a shelter bed. These shelters may include the purchase of a motel through Project Homekey, which could later be converted into permanent supportive housing as homelessness declines; master leasing a motel; and/or a tiny village (a model that provides individual shelter units and supportive services to people experiencing homelessness).

1c: Invest in an Online Resource Center

Navigating the current homeless services system can be confusing and challenging, and people experiencing homelessness sometimes receive inaccurate or outdated information. To address this, there is a crucial need for an online resource center that streamlines access to homeless services available in Pasadena. This online resource center, which will be frequently updated with the most current information available, will offer people experiencing homelessness:

- ▶ **Easy to access information on supports**, available 24/7 from any location with an internet connection. Included in the resource center will be information on the coordinated entry system (CES), prevention resources, and emergency shelter, making service delivery more efficient.
- ▶ **Centralized information on discrimination.** The online resource center will include a dedicated section on discrimination, including a section on tenant rights, what qualifies as housing discrimination, and a low-barrier survey for reporting unfair treatment or discrimination.

Moreover, the online resource center will serve as a valuable platform for community members, advocates, and system and regional partners to connect people experiencing homelessness with necessary services. To ensure the effectiveness of the online resource center, a comprehensive communication plan will be developed. This plan will facilitate the connection between people experiencing homelessness, advocates, and the online resource center through various channels, including email, social media platforms, newsletters, and informative postings at public locations.

Strategy 2: Strengthen Collaboration at All Levels

While a shortage of permanent, affordable housing is at the heart of the homelessness crisis, it is the failure of the social safety net that leaves some individuals more susceptible to homelessness while others can maintain housing. People who do fall into homelessness face a range of complex and multifaceted barriers that make it difficult to regain stable housing. Given the complexity of homelessness, no single agency or program has the

necessary resources, expertise, or capacity to solve the crisis on its own. Instead, solving homelessness requires a coordinated, community-wide effort that leverages the strengths of all stakeholders. By fostering collaboration at all levels, the CoC can harness the power of the community to make meaningful progress towards reducing homelessness.

2a: Create a Unified Approach to Ending Homelessness within the CoC

The Pasadena CoC, led by the City of Pasadena Department of Housing, is a network of service providers, local government agencies, people with lived expertise, and philanthropic organizations working together in the planning and administration of homeless services. This collaboration is vital in reducing service gaps, ensuring strong client outcomes, increasing access to services, and creating the capacity to address clients' multifaceted barriers (Jarpe et al., 2019). To further strengthen the long-term collaboration at the CoC level, the following strategies will be implemented:

► **Create four new action-oriented committees within the CoC** and ensure collaborative decision-making.

These new committees will be formed to improve communication and enhance collaborative planning within the CoC. These committees will play an advisory role to the Board and include the following:

- Systemwide Planning Committee
- Equity Committee
- Lived Experience Advisory Board
- Prevention Committee

The committees will be driven by action-oriented goals and led by community stakeholders and subject matter experts, with input from the Pasadena Department of Housing serving as the CoC lead.

► **Advance the work of Built for Zero.** With the financial support from Kaiser Permanente, the CoC is partnering with two nonprofits, Community Solutions and Union Station Homeless Services, to launch the Built for Zero (BFZ) initiative in Pasadena. BFZ is aimed at reducing chronic homelessness among single adults and veteran homelessness to functional zero, defined as a dynamic end state when homelessness is continuously rare and brief for an entire community experiencing homelessness. Through BFZ, the CoC will:

- Establish a comprehensive By Name List (BNL) of people experiencing homelessness within the community.
- Track and monitor the progress of people on the BNL, identifying and addressing bottlenecks in their journey towards permanent housing.
- Implement systemic changes and interventions based on data-driven insights to accelerate progress and reduce barriers to housing.
- Collaborate closely with Community Solutions and Union Station Homeless Services to leverage their expertise and resources in homelessness reduction strategies.
- Work towards achieving functional zero for chronic homelessness among single adults, ensuring homelessness is rare and brief, with a focus on sustainable solutions.
- Specifically target veteran homelessness, striving to achieve functional zero and providing specialized support to veterans in need.
- Continuously analyze and refine the homeless response system, optimizing processes and services to achieve measurable and sustained reductions in homelessness.
- Foster cross-sector partnerships and engage stakeholders to build a united effort in addressing homelessness at its core.

- Regularly measure and report progress to stakeholders, sharing outcomes and learnings to inspire broader change and replication of successful strategies.

2b: Increase collaboration within the City

Collaboration across city departments is crucial in ensuring that the resources available to address homelessness are used effectively and efficiently in Pasadena. Currently, however, some City Departments are still unaware of the role the CoC plays in the City and are unaware of the resources available for people experiencing homelessness. To increase collaboration across city departments and address this issue, the CoC will implement the following action:

- ▶ **Reestablish a quarterly inter-departmental meeting on homelessness.** To promote a unified effort in addressing homelessness, the CoC, led by the Department of Housing, will reestablish a quarterly meeting involving all departments that are directly or indirectly involved in homeless services to provide a forum for collaboration, information sharing, and coordination between departments. This regular meeting will provide a platform for representatives from different departments to come together and discuss common goals, identify gaps in services, and explore innovative solutions. One important goal of these meetings will be to increase service availability and work towards making outreach and other homeless services available beyond normal business hours, including weekends.

2c: Establish a Community Education Ad Hoc Committee

The Community Education Ad Hoc committee will play a pivotal role in fostering a comprehensive community-wide response. Drawing together stakeholders from a range of sectors who have a shared goal of ending homelessness, including nonprofits, affordable housing developers, faith-based organizations, business communities, and advocates.

Their efforts will focus on implementing specific strategies, including developing a “train the messenger” model to create a network of informed advocates who can spread information and support solutions to homelessness. Other areas of support include working with the Equity Committee to address racial disparities (strategy 6), creating marketing materials for landlords on supportive housing programs (strategy 16), and establishing a communications plan for an online resource center (strategy 1c). They will also provide educational materials on CES for people experiencing homelessness and the community at large (strategy 15b).

Beyond these efforts, the committee will advocate for policy reforms that address the root causes of homelessness and drive efforts to decriminalize homelessness. Acknowledging the disproportionate impact of these policies on Black communities, the Community Education Ad Hoc committee will work to raise awareness about the adverse effects of existing ordinances, championing a more effective and compassionate approach to addressing the complex issue of homelessness.

2d: Strengthen alignment and coordination with regional partners

As one of only three city CoCs in California, Pasadena has the unique ability to coordinate a targeted, localized approach to addressing homelessness. Collaboration with regional partners, however, is critical to ensuring efficiency, avoiding duplication of efforts, and coordinating resources. As a smaller City CoC situated within the much larger LA County CoC (LAHSA), it is challenging to determine how much county funding is coming into the city that is indirectly benefiting Pasadena households. The large majority of the programs funded through the CoC are targeted at single adults, while programs targeted at families and youth experiencing homelessness are supported through the county. As a result, the CoC does not always have a clear understanding of the funding

and service needs of these populations and may not be aware of programs until after they've begun operating.

To improve coordination and collaboration at a regional level, the Pasadena CoC will take the following actions to improve efficiency, share resources, and avoid duplication of efforts:

- ▶ **Re-establish a quarterly meeting with the four Los Angeles County Continuums of Care**, which include Glendale, LAHSA, Long Beach, and Pasadena. These meetings will focus on sharing information, working together to problem-solve when challenges arise, ensuring collective governance of shared systems such as HMIS and CES, and sharing information about opportunities for funding.
- ▶ **Establish a Systemwide Planning Committee** with leaders in homeless services, including agency senior-level staff, frontline staff, cross-sector partners that operate on a countywide scale, leaders of faith-based organizations, and city staff. The purpose of this committee will be to improve communication locally, ensure full coverage of services, discuss opportunities for braiding funding, and engage in proactive planning by identifying needs or gaps in services.
- ▶ **Work to advance policy and planning efforts around homelessness and housing in the San Gabriel Valley** by actively participating in the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments and Consortium. In particular, efforts will focus on advancing solutions to homelessness, sharing information, and helping to build infrastructure in neighboring cities to end regional homelessness.

2e: Promote cross-system alignment and collaboration with system partners

Meaningful reductions in homelessness in Pasadena require a more coordinated homeless response system that integrates with all systems of care that touch homelessness, identifying bottlenecks and addressing them collaboratively. These include physical and mental healthcare providers; victim service providers; Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD), Pasadena City College (PCC), the Los Angeles County Office of Education; the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services; faith-based organizations; the foster care system; the criminal justice system; and workforce development. This work must be done in tandem at the leadership level to ensure system-level planning and at the service provider level to ensure people experiencing homelessness are quickly identified and connected to essential resources. Collaboration at both levels can be enhanced through improvements to the CoC's HMIS to accelerate housing placements and streamline referral processes.

To increase cross-system alignment and collaboration with systems of care that touch homeless services, the following actions will be taken:

- ▶ **Include cross-system leadership in CoC Committees.** To strengthen coordination with cross-system partners, the CoC will include cross-system leadership in all CoC Committees. Meetings will incorporate a standing agenda item on updates from cross-system partners and opportunities for strengthening collaboration in services and funding.
- ▶ **Include system partners at regular service provider meetings.** To strengthen collaboration, the CoC will ensure system partners participate in regular service provider meetings and, where appropriate with proper privacy measures in place, review a by-name list of active clients with frontline staff. Meetings will focus on removing bottlenecks to achieve the shared goal of connecting people with housing.
- ▶ **Identify opportunities to co-locate services with systems partners**, particularly those that are trusted resources for people at risk or experiencing homelessness. These include faith-based organizations, Pasadena Unified School District, Pasadena City College, local healthcare providers, and victim service providers. By sharing space, system partners can improve accessibility for people who face barriers to accessing services, such as transportation or language barriers.

- › **Enter into data-sharing agreements with cross-sector partners**, increasing coordination to help ensure people experiencing homelessness receive the support they need.

Strategy 3: Expand Access to Mental Health & Substance Use Services

The majority of mental health services for people experiencing homelessness in Pasadena are provided by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health and health services are provided by the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Despite the presence of these agencies, accessing mental health and substance use services can be challenging due to systemic barriers inhibiting access to care, including long wait times, limited provider availability, referral requirements, low reimbursement rates for Medi-Cal providers, and an insufficient workforce (City of Pasadena Department of Housing, 2022).

To improve access and quality of care for these services, it is crucial to support system partners, including the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Health Services. By collaboratively addressing systemic barriers, the CoC can work towards a more accessible and equitable mental health system. Additionally, increasing the availability of long-term care beds available can help fill gaps in crisis-management services.

The following strategies will address these challenges:

- › **Advocate for the implementation of low-barrier mental health services rooted in the harm-reduction model at the City's proposed co-located health and mental health facility.** Recognizing the pressing need for accessible mental health services, the CoC will actively promote the adoption of this approach at the proposed facility. This service model is especially crucial for the unhoused population, as it emphasizes meeting people where they are and working collaboratively towards achievable goals, thereby fostering improved outcomes. Ideally, services will be designed to eliminate barriers to access, considering the unique circumstances and challenges faced by unhoused people. Central to these efforts will be a focus on culturally specific and trauma-informed care, ensuring that mental health support is tailored to the diverse backgrounds and experiences of those being served.
- › **Build partnerships and expand street medicine.** The CoC will establish more partnerships with street medicine teams, including mobile psychiatry to improve access to critical physical and mental health services for individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness. These teams will offer services such as clinical assessments, wound care, vaccines, street psychiatry, and referrals to appropriate services.
- › **Identify new access pathways for mental health and substance use services through collaborative partnerships.** As part of this effort, the CoC will actively engage with community organizations, local clinics, and substance use treatment centers to establish integrated pathways that ensure unhoused people can readily access the support they need. This may involve streamlining referral processes, reserving beds or blocking out times for people experiencing homelessness, and developing comprehensive care plans that address both mental health and substance use in a holistic manner.
- › **Ensure continuity of services for people transitioning from homeless services to treatment programs.** To ensure people receiving homeless services continue to receive support upon exiting treatment programs, the CoC will strengthen collaboration with local treatment centers. This will involve establishing clear communication channels and coordination mechanisms between homeless service providers and treatment centers to ensure continuity of services. In addition to improving collaboration, the CoC will work to facilitate cross-training between homeless service providers and treatment programs to foster a mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities.

Strategy 4: Strengthen the Homeless Sector Workforce

The CoC recognizes the crucial role that high-quality service provider staff play in achieving meaningful reductions in homelessness. However, high turnover rates for these staff are a significant challenge locally and throughout the country. With an average job tenure of less than two years, high vacancy rates for service providers are common, resulting in higher caseloads and burnout for the remaining staff (Rios, 2016).

4a: Improve support for the homeless service workforce

Efforts to provide support for homeless service providers are already well underway in Los Angeles County. These include the United Way of Greater Los Angeles' Home For Good partnership with global consulting firm KPMG to conduct a multi-faceted analysis of the LA homeless services sector (United Way of Greater Los Angeles, n.d.). As part of that effort, United Way is funding a Homeless Systems Change Manager to stabilize and scale the sector's workforce, increase its diversity, and enhance organizational capacity for these critical service providers.

To support these efforts and strengthen job satisfaction and retention support for homeless service providers, the CoC will:

- ▶ **Reduce administrative burden for service providers** by simplifying the invoicing process for sub-recipients that receive grant funding through the CoC. In addition, the CoC will assess funding available to sub-recipients for administrative costs compared to other local funding agencies and consider adjustments where needed. Finally, the CoC will develop training on HMIS data entry and best practices and explore ways to reduce the administrative burden related to data entry, especially in programs with high client turnover.

In addition to these efforts, the CoC is committed to advocating for workforce housing specifically tailored to the needs of the homeless service sector workforce (see strategy 5). This advocacy aligns with the City of Pasadena's Housing Element Goal 3.7 and aims to address the housing challenges faced by these essential workers, enabling them to better serve the homeless population.

Concurrently, the CoC will support the development and expansion of lived experience peer advocate programs (see strategy 6b). These programs help to reduce the high-caseload burden and help employees avoid burnout. Peers with lived experience of homelessness will help support program participants by providing some services typically relegated to case managers.

4b: Create supportive career pathways for people with lived experience of homelessness

Homeless service providers with a personal connection to their work have a more substantial long-term commitment (Rios, 2016). While providers with lived experience of homelessness bring a deep commitment and understanding to their work, they need additional support to ensure they can thrive. Specific CoC strategies will include:

- ▶ **Provide workforce development opportunities.** To help individuals with lived experience of homelessness who may have been away from the workforce for prolonged periods of time, the CoC will support workforce development opportunities, such as the peer advocate program, and create a Lived Experience Advisory Board, which allows people with lived experience to participate in meaningful ways in the CoC's programming and policymaking (see Equity & Respect strategy 6c).
- ▶ **Support peer mentorship programs.** Staff who have experienced homelessness may find it more challenging to separate work experiences from personal life. To strengthen their support, the CoC will support providers in developing a peer mentorship program that promotes mutual support among staff with lived experience.

- › **Provide training for inclusive and compassionate supervision of staff with lived experience.** To ensure supervisors are equipped with the skills to successfully manage a workforce that has experienced trauma, discrimination, and other barriers, the CoC will collaborate with providers to coordinate training specific to supporting staff with lived experience of homelessness.

Strategy 5: Increase the Supply of Affordable Housing in Pasadena

Pasadena's limited supply of affordable housing creates inflow pressure on the homeless response system. This shortage is part of a greater regional crisis: there are only 16 affordable and available units countywide for every 100 extremely low-income renter households (Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2017).

One of the most significant barriers to the development of affordable housing—voiced by affordable housing developers and nonprofits alike—is the need for ongoing funding sources for construction, rental subsidies, and supportive services.

The following actions will be taken to help increase the supply of affordable housing in Pasadena (in support of Housing Element Goal 2.6, 3.1, and 3.4):

- › **Advocate for an increase in HUD's project-based voucher cap from 30% to 50% locally** to secure additional funds to incentivize affordable housing development. In general, constructing affordable housing is not profitable for housing developers, especially for low- and very-low-income households. Therefore, deed-restricted affordable units require subsidy beyond available density or financial incentives. The City's Housing Choice Voucher program, which offers Section 8 vouchers, is crucial in providing ongoing subsidies. Currently, however, HUD mandates that only 20% of the Housing Choice Voucher program can be used for project-based vouchers. Increasing the share of funds that can be used for these vouchers to 50% locally is crucial to combat the limited supply of affordable housing.
- › **Promote increasing the supply of affordable housing in Pasadena.** While a shortage of affordable housing is intrinsically tied to the work of the CoC, the City of Pasadena's 2021-2029 Housing Element leads the City's efforts in addressing this shortage. This comprehensive document takes a multi-faceted approach to housing challenges, encompassing affordability, accessibility, homelessness, preservation of existing housing stock, and strategies for accommodating future population growth. In alignment with these goals, the CoC focuses its endeavors on specific targets and programs outlined in the Housing Element, advocating for the following measures:
 - Create a dedicated revenue source for affordable rental housing, which could include a real estate transfer tax or document recording fees, with a focus on building community support and political will around permanent housing programs.
 - Establish an expedited permitting program with clear eligibility criteria to streamline the process for affordable housing projects, supporting Housing Element goal 2.8.
 - Provide additional incentives to encourage affordable housing construction in higher resource areas and prevent over-concentration in areas with lower development costs (Housing Element program 6 and 14).
 - Update City Code to allow innovations that reduce construction costs, such as modular and manufactured components, in collaboration with the Planning & Community Development Department and the Department of Housing.

- Encourage the adaptive reuse of nonresidential buildings for affordable and mixed-income housing, building stronger partnerships with nontraditional partners like faith-based organizations and the business community (Housing Element Goals 2.5 and 3.2) while providing technical support.
- Advocate for workforce housing for the homeless service sector workforce, recognizing the crucial role they play in addressing homelessness and the challenges they face in finding affordable housing. This effort supports the City of Pasadena’s Housing Element Goal 3.7.
- ▶ **Maintain the existing supply of affordable housing** by creating a preservation inventory of affordable multifamily rental properties. Strategies will be developed to ensure continued affordability, including early identification of housing stock with expiring use restrictions. Additional strategies may include incentives to renew participation in subsidy programs, tax abatement or exemptions, education, outreach, and low-cost financial assistance to owners of older housing units, and facilitating sales to mission-oriented partners when necessary. These efforts will be in collaboration with the Planning & Community Development Department and the Department of Housing.



EQUITY & RESPECT

Marginalized groups continue to be disproportionately represented among people experiencing homelessness. For the purpose of this Plan, these include but are not limited to: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), people with disabilities, transitional-aged youth, seniors, members of the LGBTQ+ community, immigrants (including people who are undocumented), and domestic violence (DV) survivors. These disparities are driven by a complex array of historical and structural racism as well as biases, prejudices, overt discrimination, and systemic and institutional racism. Addressing these inequities requires an inclusive response that is culturally tailored and community-based.

The strategies that follow were developed in collaboration with the Equity & Respect Planning Workgroup, which consisted of experts and stakeholders from diverse backgrounds, including Black people, Hispanic and Latino people, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, seniors, representatives from the youth system, and DV survivors. These experts convened from January through March of 2023, and their contributions were essential in the development of the following strategies. Please see the Acknowledgments section for a complete list of workgroup members.

Strategy 6: Create Infrastructure to Support Equity-Focused Leadership

Infrastructure to support equity-focused leadership in the homeless services sector is essential to ensure that services and resources are distributed fairly and justly. Equity-focused leadership also helps ensure that people with lived experience of homelessness are involved in decision-making processes, and that their voices are heard and respected. This can help build trust between service providers and the communities they serve, fostering more effective and sustainable solutions to homelessness.

6a: Establish an Equity Committee to guide the CoC's assessment and reform process

The Equity Committee will play a crucial role in addressing policies and practices that perpetuate systemic racism within the CoC and the homeless response system. The committee's responsibilities include oversight of

disparity analyses to identify and address disparities in the homeless response system, with a specific focus on the experiences of marginalized groups; monitoring and tracking progress towards achieving equity targets within the CoC; actively driving reform efforts to make the homeless response system more responsive and inclusive for marginalized groups; and providing support to the Community Education Ad-Hoc Committee by developing educational materials that highlight inequities and promote strategies to eliminate them.

The committee will be supported by best practices and lessons learned from local, regional, and federal equity initiatives and will comprise stakeholders committed to equity, particularly BIPOC individuals and people with current or former homelessness experience, as well as service providers and system partners. These include members of the faith community, Pasadena Unified School District, Pasadena City College, hospitals, clinics, child welfare agencies, and the prosecutor's office who can help accelerate coordination with other systems of care.

6b: Ensure that people with lived experience play a leadership role in CoC oversight

People who have lived through homelessness have an unparalleled depth of knowledge that allows them to identify nuances often overlooked by other viewpoints. Moreover, having personally navigated the intricacies of the CoC's homeless service system, they intimately understand the various pathways to securing housing, the bureaucratic challenges that must be surmounted, and the emotional turbulence inherent in the journey towards finding a stable home. This expertise gives them invaluable insight into the supports that are most needed and the impacts of CoC policies on the unhoused community. Their experiences can also help to build compassion and understanding of the complex intersectional dimensions of homelessness. Creating a system that acknowledges and values people with lived experience in all decision-making aspects is essential, especially in advancing equity and inclusion.

To ensure that people with lived experience play a leadership role in the oversight of CoC programs and policy making, the following strategies will be implemented:

- ▶ **Establish a Lived Experience Advisory Board.** People with lived experience have a unique understanding of the most needed and desired supports. That expertise is essential in guiding improvements to the CoC's systems, services, policies, and practices. The Lived Experience Advisory Board will provide guidance in evaluating, developing, and implementing CoC programs and policies. Through this work, the Lived Experience Advisory Board will help to inform policy development and improve the quality and types of services provided.
- ▶ **Support the development and expansion of lived experience peer advocate programs,** which offer crucial support to individuals transitioning into permanent housing. Peer advocates are trained to provide guidance, assist with navigating challenges and barriers, address concerns, and connect with resources. Ongoing support is also provided throughout a resident's tenancy, offering a safe space to discuss issues and provide advocacy as needed. These programs can serve as a career pathway into case management and other support roles, fostering career development and opportunities within the homeless services sector. By supporting lived experience peer advocate programs, the CoC can strengthen the support system for those experiencing homelessness, promoting stability and success for residents.
- ▶ **Expand the representation of people with lived experience in the CoC Board composition.** CoC Board members with lived experience are key to reducing homelessness. Currently, the CoC Governance Charter requires at least one voting member to have lived experience of homelessness. The CoC will re-examine the Governance Charter to determine if the threshold should be increased and conduct proactive outreach before elections.
- ▶ **Develop a compensation policy for people with lived experience.** The CoC is dedicated to ensuring fair compensation for people with lived experience who actively engage in eligible CoC activities. To formalize this

commitment, the CoC will develop a comprehensive Compensation Policy that will be disseminated to people with lived experience who participate in CoC activities. This policy will outline the compensation structure, payment rates, payment timelines, and the payment process to guarantee that participants are well-informed in a transparent and timely manner.

6c: Provide culturally relevant and responsive training

Creating an equitable culture within the CoC starts with training leadership and staff at all levels on the racial equity framework, cultural competency, implicit bias, cultural humility and sensitivity, and trauma-informed models of care. To build equity-focused organizational capacity and address disparities, the CoC will implement the following strategies:

- › **Create, provide, and require ongoing training that focuses on equity.** Ongoing CoC training will deepen organizational understanding of racism and discrimination towards marginalized groups and promote equitable practices. Training will include, but is not limited to, cultural competency, implicit bias, the history of racism, cultural humility and sensitivity, trauma-informed care, and existing disparities in Pasadena’s homeless service system of care.
- › **Tailor equity training to individual roles in the CoC.** Offering role-specific training is crucial for ensuring that CoC stakeholders have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform jobs effectively. Tailoring training to address each unique CoC role is essential to ensure that education is actionable, meaningful, and effective. Frontline staff, case managers, management, CoC leadership and advisory groups (including the CoC Board and CoC Committee members), and nontraditional partners like faith-based organizations and other city departments should all receive role-specific training.
- › **Contract with experienced trainers who represent diverse perspectives,** including people of color and people with lived experience, for culturally relevant training. Training will foster empathy, understanding, critical thinking, and problem-solving and be provided in an environment that promotes honest and authentic conversations. Trainers will have qualifications and experience in the specific area they are covering, skills for productive conversations and group management, and a commitment to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment.

Strategy 7: Strengthen the Process for Reporting and Responding to Unfair or Discriminatory Treatment

To ensure accountability and promote a more equitable homeless response system, it is crucial that people receiving services from the CoC have the ability to report incidents of discrimination by private landlords or service providers. While the Pasadena CoC already has a formal grievance policy, the process for filing grievances could be improved. The following actions will be taken to develop an effective mechanism for reporting and responding to unfair or discriminatory treatment:

- › **Work with the Housing Rights Center to create a section in the online resource center on housing discrimination** with easy-to-understand explanations of what qualifies as housing discrimination, how to report housing discrimination to the Housing Rights Center, and landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities. To enhance the accessibility of resources, the CoC will ensure information about the online resource center is shared at program entry and during participants’ annual review.
- › **Develop a low-barrier survey for CoC-funded program participants to share feedback anonymously** regarding program operations, including discriminatory treatment, with a process for following up on concerns to ensure complaints are addressed or participants are connected with resources to pursue appropriate actions

to address the discriminatory conduct. This may include referrals to legal services, advocacy organizations, or other relevant entities. Additionally, program participants will be provided with information about the survey at program entry and during their annual review.

- › **Improve the CoC’s system for responding to reports of discrimination.** To support these efforts, the CoC will provide training on the purpose of the CoC’s survey and best practices in resolving reports of discrimination. Instances of housing discrimination will be resolved by the Housing Rights Center. The CoC will consider documented instances of discrimination or unfair treatment and evaluate program performance, including disparity analyses, both when reviewing funding proposals and as part of any program audits.

Strategy 8: Strengthen Support for Marginalized Groups

8a: Strengthen support for Black people facing discrimination in the private housing market.

Black people in Pasadena make up a disproportionate percentage of the homeless population, representing 30% of people experiencing homelessness despite comprising only 8% of the overall population (Pasadena CoC, 2023 & U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). This jarring trend is not unique to Pasadena and is comparable to nationwide findings. These disparities are the result of historical discrimination in housing, criminal justice, child welfare, and education systems, which continue to impact homelessness today.

Despite accessing homeless services at similar rates to other groups, Black people exit homelessness to permanent housing at lower rates. This is particularly evident in tenant-based permanent housing programs, which provide participants with rental assistance to lease an apartment of their choice from a landlord in the private rental market. This discrepancy suggests discrimination by private rental market landlords (Pasadena CoC, 2022). Taken together, these factors create a significant burden for members of Pasadena’s Black community who seek housing. To strengthen support for Black people facing discrimination in the private housing market, the following actions will be taken:

- › **Create educational materials to ensure landlords and tenants are aware of tenant protections** such as the Fair Housing Act, including HUD’s guidance on how the Fair Housing Act applies to the use of criminal history, and California’s Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), which includes source of income protections (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2016). These materials should also include tools to report landlord discrimination and identify available resources for legal assistance.
- › **Develop a housing resource toolkit for clients that supports case managers** by including a sample rental application, a client telephone guide, tips on finding an apartment, talking with landlords, and an explanation of lease terms in plain language. Ensure this resource acknowledges the barriers to housing that Black people face and provide tools for overcoming some of these barriers, such as a sample script to respond to questions that may be asked about past involvement in the justice system, evictions, credit history, and housing vouchers. This resource should also include clear directions to report discrimination.
- › **Strengthen housing navigation supports by ensuring services provide targeted, one-on-one support** for participants facing barriers that intersect with race, including but not limited to past involvement in the criminal justice system, prior evictions, and transitioning out of foster care. This support may include in-person advocacy for participants when they apply for housing, transportation assistance for apartment viewings, financial literacy support (including credit repair and flexible funding to address individual needs), assistance reviewing lease agreements, and assistance in practicing responses to common questions from landlords. This could include incorporating more staff with lived experiences who may be more adept at quickly identifying and addressing landlord discrimination during the application process.

- ▶ **Advocate for “Fair Chance to Housing” protections** to reduce housing access barriers for people with justice involvement (California Assembly Bill 2383). Criminal background checks are one of the many factors perpetuating disparities in access to housing for Black people. Research shows that prior criminal history is not a predictor of tenant behavior (Malone, 2009). Fair Chance to Housing protections prevent landlords from collecting information regarding a potential tenant’s criminal history before signing a lease, allowing potential tenants the opportunity to share their stories to potential landlords and humanize their experience.
- ▶ **Ensure ongoing housing retention support.** To ensure that individuals participating in permanent housing programs have ongoing access to community support to maintain their housing and are informed about reporting discrimination, the CoC, in collaboration with the Equity Committee, will ensure access to housing retention supports. This will include providing education and resources on the Fair Housing Act and other relevant laws and regulations, as well as information on how to report incidents of discrimination through the Housing Rights Center or the CoC’s online survey. Additionally, the CoC will work to establish partnerships with local organizations and advocates to provide ongoing housing retention support and resources to residents, including advocacy and legal services.

8b: Ensure that Hispanic and Latino people have equitable access to homeless services

While Black people face discrimination in the private housing market, Hispanic and Latino people are accessing Pasadena homeless services at lower rates than their overall share of the unhoused population. Homelessness often looks different for Hispanic and Latino communities, with many people doubling or tripling up in housing or couch surfing. Unfortunately, these scenarios do not align with HUD’s definition of homelessness, and therefore it can be challenging to connect people with the resources they need. In addition, higher rates of first-time homelessness among the Hispanic and Latino population means people are new to the homeless service system and may not know where to go for services or how to get help. Some people may also fear that seeking services will impact their immigration status.

To address these challenges, the following actions will ensure Hispanic and Latino people have equitable access to homeless services:

- ▶ **Ensure effective and culturally relevant outreach to Hispanic and Latino communities.** The CoC will proactively establish partnerships with trusted networks and institutions within the Hispanic and Latino community, including faith-based organizations, PUSD and PCC, local healthcare providers, and the Public Health Department’s promotora program. Through these collaborations, the CoC will disseminate information about available services and housing resources and explore opportunities for co-locating services. Communications will be culturally appropriate, proactive, and frequent, with a particular focus on services available regardless of immigration status. All materials will be available in Spanish, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for all community members.
- ▶ **Encourage staff hiring that reflects client demographics as well as fluent Spanish speakers** by offering education, training, and opportunities that support career pathways into case management. Staff who reflect the culture of the target population can build rapport and better explain program requirements.

8c: Provide strengthened support for other marginalized groups

The CoC will also strengthen support for other marginalized groups that are overrepresented or more vulnerable among people experiencing homelessness, including people with disabilities, people who identify as LGBTQ+, DV survivors, immigrants (including people who are undocumented), transitional aged youth (18-24), and seniors (62+). Over three quarters (76%) of people experiencing homelessness during the 2023 Homeless Count had a disability (compared to 9% of Pasadena’s overall population), 25% were fleeing domestic violence, 18% were seniors (compared to 15% in 2022), and 10% of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness identified as

LGBTQ+ (compared to 3.5% in 2022) (Pasadena CoC, 2023 & U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). To ensure adequate support of these groups, the following steps will be taken:

- ▶ **Prioritize accessibility in all aspects of the CoC’s programs, policies, and housing.** The CoC will integrate accessibility considerations in all elements of its work. This will include updating CoC written standards to ensure that its supportive services are accessible to individuals with disabilities by identifying and addressing any physical, programmatic, or communication barriers. In addition, the CoC will integrate accessibility into all aspects of the development of site-based permanent housing projects and new shelter units and advocate to increase the inventory of accessible units in the private rental market.
- ▶ **Require the implementation of client-driven trauma-informed care.** The CoC’s written standards will be updated to reflect the commitment to a tailored, responsive, flexible, and voluntary approach for all CoC-funded programs. Participants will be empowered to lead the process and choose the support that they deem most necessary, with the assistance of an advocate or case manager. Programs will be evaluated during regular monitoring visits to ensure that these policies are effectively implemented. An essential component of this approach is maintaining an ongoing dialogue with participants to obtain feedback on what they would like to see improved, what they appreciate about the program, and how they experience the program’s guidelines.
- ▶ **Build in flexibility for rental and financial assistance.** While funding sources may impose certain requirements or rules around the administration of financial assistance, service providers will be encouraged to adopt a progressive engagement model that allows for flexibility whenever possible. This includes being able to adjust rental assistance as needed to meet the unique needs of individuals, such as DV survivors who may have frequent court hearings or need to relocate for safety reasons, transitional-aged youth who may have reduced income while pursuing education, or people with disabilities who experience unexpected changes in their health status. Moreover, service providers will be encouraged to ensure financial assistance is flexible enough to accommodate nontraditional expenses, such as education, children’s needs, transportation, and safety measures to ensure their homes are accessible and secure.
- ▶ **Strengthen lease-up support for families and multigenerational households.** Large families experiencing homelessness often require larger rental units that can accommodate multigenerational households or extended family members. However, these types of units can be scarce and may require additional support to secure. By developing partnerships with landlords who offer larger rental units, providers can help increase the availability of appropriate housing options for families and improve their chances of securing stable housing.
- ▶ **Foster partnerships between immigration legal aid and homeless services.** While homeless service providers often focus their efforts on tenant protections and legal aid related to evictions, specialized legal aid related to immigration issues is especially needed for households at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness. This population may require legal assistance to obtain documentation needed to access housing resources and advice regarding potential impacts on their immigration status. To address these barriers, the Pasadena CoC will work to foster partnerships between immigration legal aid and homeless service providers to develop service referral pathways and support cross-training between these two sectors.
- ▶ **Build and strengthen cross-system partnerships to ensure wrap-around supportive services tailored to meet individual needs.** The CoC will establish new and strengthen existing partnerships with mental health service providers, disability rights organizations, domestic violence programs, and LGBTQ+ organizations, among others. These efforts will ensure a diverse range of expertise and resources are available to people experiencing homelessness to address their multifaceted needs. In addition, efforts will include mitigating the impact of trauma and changing service providers’ understanding of the experiences of these groups.

- › **Support the development of specialized services.** Where possible, the CoC will partner with organizations to develop specialized services and programs that address the unique needs of marginalized groups (i.e., LGBTQ+ shower program and DV survivor-specific services).

Strategy 9: Measure Progress in Improving Equity

Effective measurement and evaluation strategies are critical for addressing equity among people experiencing homelessness. An understanding of demographic trends will facilitate the identification of service gaps and targeting of resources to groups most in need. The CoC will take the following actions to measure and evaluate its progress in addressing service disparities:

- › **Ongoing disparity analyses.** At a minimum, the CoC will conduct annual analyses of HMIS, PIT, Stella-P, and census data to identify disparities in service provision and outcomes, utilizing its findings to inform response strategies. Analyses will include access to services, referrals to and successful lease-up of permanent housing, and returns to homelessness.
- › **Incorporate analysis of disparities in language access** by developing a new preferred language field in HMIS to aid in assessing staffing needs in various languages and increase access to services.
- › **Measure progress in eliminating disparities.** The CoC will measure progress in achieving equity targets and develop new equity-related goals based on emerging trends from racial disparity analyses as needed. The CoC's Equity Committee will be responsible for tracking progress on equity measures (e.g., milestones, goals, etc.) to ensure the system is addressing racial equity and justice.
- › **Foster community education to build a shared understanding of disparities.** Results of the disparity analysis and progress on equity metrics will be shared with CoC leaders, partners, providers, and stakeholders. Trainings may also be provided to build a shared understanding of the scope and drivers of disparities as well as the urgent need to address them.



CRISIS
RESPONSE

CRISIS RESPONSE

The Crisis Response system plays a vital role in providing support to individuals and families experiencing homelessness, offering a range of services such as shelter, street outreach, and resources that meet people's immediate needs, such as food, showers, and laundry. As these services are closely interconnected and support people's pathways to permanent housing, effective collaboration among crisis response providers is essential to achieve positive outcomes.

The strategies that follow were developed in collaboration with the Crisis Response Planning Workgroup, which consisted of experts and stakeholders from diverse backgrounds who convened from January through March of 2023. Their contributions were essential in the development of the following strategies. Please see the Acknowledgments section for a complete list of workgroup members.

Strategy 10: Strengthen the Response Coordination and Referral System

Real-time connections to crisis response services are essential for people experiencing homelessness. Currently, unhoused residents connect with crisis response services through street outreach teams, 211 LA County, Pasadena's Citizen Service Center (311), immediate support networks, and direct referrals. In addition, community members can aid in response coordination for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness through Pasadena's citizen service app or the LA-HOP website, which sends requests to local street outreach teams.

10a: Develop a more accessible, transparent, and timely referral system

While offering a range of options to get connected to services can enhance accessibility, it can also create confusion and make it challenging to navigate multiple systems. Consequently, individuals experiencing homelessness have reported difficulties in navigating the homeless services system and sometimes received inaccurate or outdated information. Likewise, community members and system partners have encountered obstacles in connecting people with Pasadena's crisis response services. To address these issues and ensure a more transparent, accessible, and timely response coordination and referral system, the following actions will be implemented:

- › **Establish an online resource center for crisis services** where people can quickly connect with the services and support they need. The online center will provide information on shelter, street outreach, essential services available in Pasadena, and the Coordinated Entry System (CES) (see strategy 1c).
- › **Create a communications plan for the online resource center** in collaboration with the Lived Experience Advisory Board and Ad Hoc Committee on Community Education. This plan will aim to connect people experiencing homelessness and advocates with the resource center through various channels, including email, social media, newsletters, and postings at public locations.

10b: Strengthen collaboration between crisis response providers

The time-sensitive nature of crisis response services necessitates real-time communication among providers. Currently, however, there is no central place for crisis response providers to share information on resources available to people experiencing homelessness. Even if service providers are aware of the services offered by various agencies, high turnover rates make it challenging for crisis response staff to connect clients with the most appropriate contacts for services. Additionally, due to the nature of crisis response work, service providers often need to connect people experiencing homelessness with services outside of regular business hours. To enhance collaboration between crisis response providers, the following approach will be implemented:

- › **Develop a system for real-time communication, collaboration, and information sharing**, such as Slack or Discord, to help strengthen collaboration between crisis response providers and ensure a more timely connection to services for people experiencing homelessness. This system will be accessible to all crisis response service providers and have CoC oversight. The system will allow providers to create multiple channels or feeds for specific topics and send direct messages, enabling them to quickly find the best contact for needed services. Additionally, these systems are searchable and users can share files, meaning providers don't need to ask the same question twice, and new staff can be onboarded quickly. Finally, systems like Slack allow real-time communication as well as communication outside of regular business hours, ensuring providers have access to the information they need when they need it.
- › **Create physical space for response coordination and referrals.** In addition to bolstering communication between providers, the CoC will work to create more physical spaces for response coordination and referrals. The immediate focus of these efforts will be to co-locate services at existing locations people experiencing homelessness are more likely to frequent to build collaboration and facilitate service coordination. The CoC will also advocate for the creation of a multi-service center where people experiencing homelessness can access the services they need in one place and get connected with CES. Ideally, this center would be a shared space, serving as a central point for all service providers in Pasadena.

Strategy 11: Target Street Outreach to Equitably Meet the Needs of People who are Unsheltered

Street outreach teams develop critical relationships with people who are unsheltered, providing connections to interim and permanent housing, service referrals, and case management while establishing rapport by providing life-saving resources such as food, water, clothing, blankets, and other necessities. The following actions will be taken to ensure that outreach efforts are equitable and meet the diverse needs of people who are unsheltered:

- › **Support person-centered, housing-focused, and trauma-informed street outreach** by developing best practice training resources for street outreach teams in Pasadena. Protocols for harm reduction through non-judgmental, non-coercive provision of services should be included, as well as resources to ensure people fleeing domestic violence have safe and confidential access to the coordinated entry system and domestic violence services.

- ▶ **Increase collaboration between street outreach teams.** Foster stronger connections between street outreach teams through the new online communication platform, as well as existing spaces for collaboration, such as Pasadena’s regular street outreach meetings. These efforts will focus on developing service plans and case conferencing as people are getting connected with the services they need.
- ▶ **Enhance the quality of data collection, outcome tracking, and reporting.** The CoC will work with street outreach programs to ensure HMIS data meets expectations for recording services, tracking outcomes, and reporting. Technical assistance will be provided as necessary to support accurate data entry. Additionally, the CoC will collaborate with regional partners to implement and provide training on map-based capabilities within HMIS, facilitating greater collaboration among street outreach teams.

Strategy 12: Strengthen and Expand Emergency Shelter & Interim Housing Programs

Emergency shelters and interim housing offer temporary respite while people work towards permanent housing. These crucial programs, however, have seen significant inventory reductions over the last three years, fueled largely by the pandemic and the decompression of beds at facility-based shelters. While one-time block grants available during the pandemic helped soften these losses through motel voucher programs, this funding is coming to an end, and the CoC now faces a significant reduction in shelter funding despite the continued need for beds. In addition to the strategies laid out in strategy 1b of Systemwide Planning (invest in 70 new shelter beds), the following actions will be taken to strengthen and expand emergency shelter and interim housing programs:

- ▶ **Reduce barriers to shelter.** To ensure shelter beds are accessible to people who need them most, the CoC’s written standards will be updated to formalize a low-barrier approach. This includes eligibility criteria that do not restrict access based on alcohol or drug use, lack of income, criminal history, pet ownership, or personal belongings. Protocols will be implemented to ensure all households have access to shelter beds, including people fleeing domestic violence, people who identify as LGBTQ+, couples without children, two-parent households, and mothers with teen children. Shelters will be encouraged to implement safe and voluntary supportive services and policies that allow for the storage of personal items, greater privacy, longer stays, and higher levels of safety for residents. All services provided should focus on helping households access and sustain permanent housing as quickly as possible, beginning with a housing plan at entry that is reviewed regularly to ensure progress.
- ▶ **Encourage safe and appropriate shelter diversion.** Written standards will also be updated to encourage shelter programs to engage people in a solutions-focused conversation, first identifying safe alternatives to shelter rather than immediate shelter intakes. Utilizing a strength-based approach, this conversation will be supported with county problem-solving funds which provide limited and one-time financial assistance to ensure a connection to an alternative temporary or permanent housing option.
- ▶ **Advocate for the creation of recuperative care (medical respite) beds.** In addition to traditional emergency shelter beds, there is a significant need for respite or recuperative care beds within and surrounding the CoC’s jurisdiction. Living in unsheltered conditions can exacerbate healthcare needs for unhoused individuals, who may be too ill to recover from an illness while living on the street but are not sick enough to remain in the hospital. To address this need, the CoC will develop new partnerships and identify funding sources that could be used to support the creation of recuperative care beds, which can provide a safe environment for individuals experiencing homelessness with healthcare needs during the transition from hospital discharge, while also ensuring comprehensive medical care coordination and case management services.

Strategy 13: Ensure Shelters are Safe, Secure, and Clean

In addition to expanding shelter capacity, the CoC is committed to ensuring the safety, security, and cleanliness of emergency shelters to improve trust and curtail the trauma of being unhoused. Emergency shelter is often the first point of contact with the homeless response system and can shape people's impressions of the community's response to homelessness. The CoC will implement the following strategies to ensure the quality of shelters operating in Pasadena:

- › **Develop quality assurance standards** that will include consideration of client choice and needs in shelter placement. Guidelines will be established to ensure agency collaboration with motel owners as well as regular contact with participants to increase service providers' awareness of motel conditions. Regular contact helps to ensure appropriate support, builds trust, and facilitates the development of a long-term plan addressing individual needs and continuity of care. Agencies will notify the CoC when issues arise, and efforts will be made to support motel owners in making repairs, if necessary.
- › **Increase storage opportunities** to reduce the quantity of belongings brought to shelters. Accessible storage with individual units will be prioritized to ensure privacy and safety while reducing staffing needs.
- › **Foster relationships with motel owners** to ensure participant support and enhance safety and security. The CoC will collaborate with other City departments, such as the Public Health Department, to establish a consistent schedule of annual motel inspections to verify that each room is up to code. When problems arise, the CoC will work with motel owners to address concerns and ensure necessary repairs. Finally, the CoC will work with motel voucher providers to ensure that program budgets include a dedicated funding source for damages that may be caused by participants.
- › **Ensure standards are met at facility-based shelters.** The CoC will require that participants in funded shelter programs are connected with the CoC's online survey upon program entry. Through this anonymous survey, participants will be able to share their feedback and experiences, fostering transparency and accountability.

Strategy 14: Strengthen and Increase Access to Essential Services

Many Pasadena service providers facilitate essential needs for people who are unhoused, including food, clothing, toiletries, laundry, and showers. These essential services not only meet immediate needs, but also serve as a crucial entry point to connect people experiencing homelessness with a comprehensive range of support and resources. People with lived experience of homelessness, as well as service providers and key partners, recommended strengthening these services by improving access and tailoring them to individual needs. The CoC will take the following actions to address these recommendations:

- › **Identify and develop partnerships with trusted networks and institutions** to share information about resources available in Pasadena, develop standards for warm hand-offs, and establish dedicated points of contact. These partnerships may be formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- › **Increase the dependability of crisis services** by identifying permanent service locations and co-locating services (see strategy 10b).
- › **Increase the number of safe parking program sites.** The 2023 Homeless Count indicates that 5% of people experiencing homelessness are living in their cars or RVs. However, Pasadena's no overnight parking ordinance can result in residents constantly moving or risk receiving citations or having their vehicles towed. Moreover,

people living in their cars often lack access to safe and secure places to park, which can create safety concerns, including the risk of crime or harassment. To address these challenges, the CoC will advocate for an increase in the number of safe parking sites, which provide a stable environment for individuals experiencing homelessness who are living in their vehicles, as well as access to supportive services, including case management, to help them secure permanent housing. Efforts will center on increased collaboration with system partners and faith-based organizations to develop safe parking programs and braided funding opportunities.

- ▶ **Offer training for essential service providers** on harm reduction, trauma-informed response training, cultural competency, implicit bias, institutional racism, and the history of racism (see strategy 6c).



EQUITY &
RESPECT

HOUSING & SUPPORTS

The Housing & Supports action area plays a pivotal role in guiding people on their journey to secure permanent housing. This pathway encompasses a range of critical steps, beginning with the Coordinated Entry System (CES), progressing through housing navigation, and ultimately providing essential support for those in permanent housing programs. These programs are essential to the CoC's efforts to reduce homelessness, providing a stable and secure living environment that enables people experiencing homelessness to achieve long-term stability and self-sufficiency.

The strategies set forth in this action area are driven by a commitment to equity, encompassing efforts to enhance the CES process, increase transparency and education surrounding local coordinated entry, bolster lease-up supports to expedite exits from homelessness, and expand permanent housing programs to provide lasting solutions for those in need. These strategies were developed in collaboration with the Pathways to Permanent Housing Planning Workgroup, which included individuals from diverse backgrounds. Their contributions were essential in developing the following strategies. Please refer to the Acknowledgments section for a complete list of workgroup members.

Strategy 15: Improve the Coordinated Entry System

The Coordinated Entry System (CES) is a centralized process that aims to streamline access to housing and services for people experiencing homelessness. The Pasadena CoC is part of a shared regional CES with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) and Glendale CoC. This system works to ensure that the most vulnerable and at-risk individuals and families are prioritized for assistance, and that limited resources are used in the most effective way possible. The process involves a standardized assessment tool, currently the Vulnerability Index and Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), to evaluate individual needs and match them to appropriate housing interventions and support services. The ultimate goal of the CES is to help individuals and families experiencing homelessness find and maintain stable housing as quickly as possible while ensuring that resources are used efficiently and equitably.

15a: Improve the CES process

Effective implementation of the CES is crucial to ensure appropriate support. However, system and regional partners interviewed during the community engagement process noted that the accuracy of the VI-SPDAT is heavily dependent on the individual conducting the assessment. Recent research has also found racial and gender bias in this tool, which is the primary assessment tool used by CoCs regionally and across the nation (Cronley, 2020). To address these concerns, the LA County CES Triage Tool Research and Refinement (CESTTRR) team has developed a new tool that is currently being piloted. This tool has a narrowed set of questions and modified wording to more accurately predict vulnerability without racial bias and retraumatization.

To strengthen the CES process and ensure an equitable distribution of resources to people who need them, the following strategies will be implemented:

- ▶ **Ensure equity in the administration of the assessment tool.** To ensure cultural responsiveness and trauma-informed practices during assessments, the CoC will require equity training for staff administering the CES tool. This training will be developed in collaboration with the Lived Experience Advisory Board and will include best practices informed by the CESTTRR team, as well as guidance on reducing bias in assessments.
- ▶ **Formalize the process for case conferencing to improve equity in the system.** While the CES assessment tool provides essential quantitative data, case managers' qualitative input, gathered through case conferencing meetings, is equally vital in making informed matching decisions. In our pursuit of equity in this critical process, the CoC is dedicated to the development of a uniform and standardized case management procedure. This effort will help to ensure that every participant's unique needs and circumstances are given the thorough consideration they deserve, contributing to a more equitable and effective CES.

15b: Strengthen education on CES and transparency of the system

Feedback from focus group participants with lived experience of homelessness highlighted the perception that prioritization for housing services is unfair, opaque, or difficult to navigate. Some individuals did not understand or agree with the prioritization process. To increase transparency and education, the CoC will implement the following strategies:

- ▶ **Develop user-friendly communications materials on the CES process.** Informed by the Lived Experience Advisory Board, the Community Education Ad Hoc Committee will create clear and concise materials on CES that help participants better understand and navigate the system. These materials will cover a range of topics, including where to go for assessment, the support provided during the assessment process, how case managers and housing navigators are assigned, an explanation of limited housing resources, and estimated timelines for transitioning into permanent housing. In addition, the CoC will work with the Lived Experience Advisory Board to develop clear and consistent messaging guidelines for case managers, ensuring effective communication on CES limitations and the prioritization process.
- ▶ **Establish a process for CES feedback.** The CoC will work with Union Station Homeless Services and Sycamores, the CES leads in Pasadena, to establish a process for soliciting CES participant feedback to address their experiences and concerns. This feedback will inform ongoing improvements to the coordinated entry process.

15c: Increase access to CES

Multiple CES access points offer many benefits for people experiencing homelessness, including reducing barriers to access and increasing the likelihood that individuals will be connected with appropriate services. However, this can also result in confusion for people experiencing homelessness. The CoC will take the following steps to provide clarity on how to access CES:

- › **Develop a CES section in the online resource center.** This CoC website resource will be shared with service providers, city departments, and community partners (see strategy 1c).
- › **Advocate for the development of a multi-service center in Pasadena** that will serve as a centralized location for accessing homeless services, including CES. The CoC will work with local partners to identify potential locations and funding opportunities for this center (see strategy 10b).
- › **Raise community awareness of CES and the online resource center.** In collaboration with the Community Education Ad Hoc Committee, the CoC will form partnerships with trusted networks, institutions, and system partners to share information on CES and online resource center information to people experiencing homelessness, service providers, community organizations, and local businesses, enhancing community awareness.

Strategy 16: Strengthen Lease-up Support

Once connected to housing vouchers or rental assistance, people experiencing homelessness still face many barriers. In addition to a highly competitive rental market, they must often deal with stigma and discrimination within the private housing market. Landlords may deny housing to people based on criminal background, evictions on record, poor credit or debt, and housing history. While California law prohibits landlords from refusing to rent to tenants just because they have a Section 8 voucher, this discrimination still takes place.

To strengthen support for people who face barriers and discrimination in the private rental market, the CoC will:

- › **Develop a housing resource workshop or toolkit** available through the Pasadena Partnership website. Elements of this will include:

- A (pre-filled) sample rental application
- A client telephone guide
- Tips on finding an apartment
- Tips on talking with landlords
- An explanation of lease terms
- Rights for housing resources that include documentation required for pets
- Clear directions on how to report discrimination and resources for legal assistance
- How to identify housing preferences
- A mock interview video

This resource should clearly acknowledge housing barriers that Black people are more likely to face in the private rental market and provide tools for overcoming these, such as a sample script to explain past involvement in the justice system or evictions.

- › **Strengthen and expand landlord support** to increase the number of landlords renting to program participants with rental assistance. The CoC will work with the Public Housing Authority (PHA) to develop user-friendly communication materials on landlord incentives and damage mitigation funds as well as exploring offering reduced-cost services to landlords renting to participants through the Municipal Assistance, Solutions, and Hiring (MASH) program, such as accessibility accommodations, landscaping and cleanup, and painting.
- › **Develop professional landlord marketing materials.** The CoC will collaborate with the Pasadena Housing Authority to create informative marketing materials for landlords regarding permanent supportive housing vouchers. The materials will include pamphlets or a folder that applicants can provide to landlords, with clear and concise program information, frequently asked questions, and contact information for the Department of

Housing to address any specific program-related questions. Additionally, a QR code to a video with program information will be included in the materials to make it more accessible to landlords.

Strategy 17: Strengthen and Expand Permanent Housing Programs

Permanent housing programs, including permanent supportive housing (PSH) and rapid rehousing (RRH), are the most effective solution for ending homelessness. However, the low turnover rates and challenging rental market highlight the need for additional housing units, including the development of site-based permanent supportive housing.

17a: Expand PSH, RRH, and other long-term subsidy programs

The fundamental solution to homelessness is housing. The strong program outcomes in the CoC's permanent housing programs speak for themselves: over 95% of people in permanent housing programs maintain or exit to permanent housing, and less than 5% of people who exit from permanent housing programs return to homelessness.

The following actions will be taken to prioritize and expand PSH, RRH, and other long-term subsidy programs:

- ▶ **Creation of 150 additional permanent housing units and rental assistance vouchers.** As detailed in strategy 1a, systems improvements must be coupled with aggressive measures to increase the development of and access to permanent housing programs. To address the shortage of permanent housing options, a multi-pronged approach must be implemented, including the development of new permanent housing projects that will provide 90 new units, the distribution of 45 permanent housing vouchers for use in the private rental market, and the implementation of a new rapid rehousing program to accommodate 15 more households.
- ▶ **Promote shared housing to increase client rental options and affordability** while offering a sense of community in scattered-site permanent housing programs. Shared housing can also expand the supply of permanent supportive housing beyond multi-family apartment buildings to single-family zones in the City. As demonstrated by a recent collaboration between the Housing Department and Union Station Homeless Services which involved the purchase of a three-bedroom home, single-family homes can be divided into individual units, with Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) on the property to increase density. Key to this effort is the development of housing navigation services focused on shared housing. Services should include landlord engagement, master leasing of units with participant leases for individual rooms, roommate matching, tenancy/roommate agreements, and stabilization/conflict resolution.
- ▶ **Generate support for the creation of new funding sources for permanent housing** through education and advocacy, similar to the City of LA's new "Homelessness and Housing Solutions" tax (Real Property Transfer Tax and Measure, Los Angeles Office of Finance, n.d.). Central to this strategy is building community support and political will around permanent housing programs.
- ▶ **Explore opportunities to partner with providers to master lease apartments.** This strategy allows providers to become the primary leaseholder for some or all building units, subleasing individual units to clients. Master leasing helps shorten the time to private rental market lease-ups and reduces housing barriers related to criminal and eviction history, poor credit, lack of employment, or debt. In addition, master leasing can provide an extra layer of protection for private landlords by reducing the risk of having vacant units or covering damages, helping to foster relationships with new landlords and developers (Urban Institute, 2022).

17b: Ensure adequate supportive services in permanent housing programs

People are most successful when housing is paired with the right level of voluntary and accessible support based on individualized needs and preferences. To ensure adequate supportive services in permanent housing programs, the CoC will take the following actions:

- › **Strengthen partnerships between providers of housing, aging and disability services, and health care**—including treatment for mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders—by co-locating and coordinating services as well as integrating health, mental health, substance use disorder, safety, and wellness services with housing.
- › **Connect agencies to technical assistance to bill to new funding streams for supportive services**, including providing connections to technical support for the California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) program and the Medi-Cal Managed California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Health Homes Program.
- › **Support the development and expansion of peer advocate programs** to bolster support for program participants and case managers. These programs should build off the credible messenger model, where advocates have sustainably achieved permanent housing but share their lived experiences, giving them more credibility as role models. Peer advocate programs can help transition residents into their new homes, provide additional support as needed throughout their tenancy, and offer them a safe space to talk about issues, providing a critical link between residents and case managers. These programs can also serve as a career pathway into case management.

17c: Expand support for tenants moving on from permanent supportive housing (PSH)

Moving On programs enable site-based PSH tenants who may no longer require intensive case management or on-site supportive services to move to a private apartment within the community. These programs also enable the CoC to allocate its resources (site-based PSH) to those who face significant challenges in securing housing in the private rental market. While the CoC already has a formal Moving On policy for site-based PSH residents, more support is needed for participants looking to make this change. The CoC will take the following actions to address this need:

- › **Create formalized Moving On programs.** Key program components should include case managers trained to prepare tenants to move, coordination with the Housing Authority to connect tenants with an ongoing rental subsidy, coordination of ongoing services and supports, housing navigation/location services, and funds for moving costs.
- › **Ensure sustained services for people transitioning from site-based PSH.** Ensuring case management services (e.g., a year extension) for residents who move out of site-based PSH will help ensure participants successfully transition into other stable housing arrangements.



PREVENTION

PREVENTION

Efforts to prevent homelessness play a critical role in the CoC's mission to end homelessness in the community. Prevention programs focus on addressing the underlying factors that lead to housing instability and aim to intervene before individuals and families experience homelessness. By providing early support and resources, prevention initiatives help households facing a housing crisis to maintain stable housing and avoid the trauma and challenges associated with homelessness. The following strategies are designed to strengthen prevention programs, increase accessibility, and ensure equitable provision of services to those at highest risk. Strategies to address housing discrimination and affordable housing supply, which are critical to preventing homelessness, are addressed in the Equity and Respect and Systemwide action areas (respectively).

The strategies that follow were developed in collaboration with the Inflows to Homelessness Planning Workgroup, a group of experts and stakeholders who convened from January through March of 2023. The group included individuals from a variety of backgrounds, and their contributions were essential in the development of the following strategies. In addition, USC's Homelessness Policy Research Institute (HPRI) provided invaluable insights for strategies to address inflows from systems of care that touch homelessness. Please see the Acknowledgments section for a complete list of workgroup members.

Strategy 18: Establish a Prevention Committee to Lead Efforts in Reducing Inflows to Homelessness

Cross-system collaboration is crucial to actively prevent and address upstream factors that contribute to homelessness. Many different systems, service providers, and stakeholders play a role in preventing homelessness. To create a unified effort and drive local prevention strategies, the CoC will establish a cross-sector Prevention Committee. The Prevention Committee will be responsible for implementing the strategies in this plan as well as ongoing stakeholder assessment and engagement to better understand which prevention responses are most effective. This work will also include disseminating information on emerging prevention strategies.

Members of the Prevention Committee will include representatives from a wide range of stakeholders, which may

include, but are not limited to, the City of Pasadena Department of Housing, homelessness prevention service providers, and system partners including representatives from the Families in the Transition office, the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), the Pasadena Tenants Union, faith-based organizations, Huntington Hospital, and senior centers.

Strategy 19: Enhance Prevention Efforts

Homelessness prevention programs help families and individuals resolve housing crises that would otherwise cause them to lose their homes. Current services include short-term rental assistance, limited case management, and legal defense against eviction.

19a: Increase access to prevention services

To ensure that prevention services reach households before they lose their housing, it is essential to enhance access to these services and establish trusted networks and institutions as first points of contact. The CoC, in collaboration with the Prevention Committee, will take several actions to ensure that prevention programs serve people most at risk of homelessness:

- ▶ **Develop a prevention section within the online resource center** where people can quickly connect with services and support. This center should provide comprehensive information on traditional prevention programs, legal services to assist households facing eviction, how to report housing discrimination, and basic tenant rights in Pasadena. To support this effort, the CoC will develop a communication plan to connect people at risk of homelessness with the online resource center through a variety of channels, including email, social media, newsletters, and postings at public locations. The communication plan will ensure people are reached through channels they already use, ensuring information about prevention services, how to access them, and steps that can be taken to prevent homelessness are easily accessible.
- ▶ **Provide effective and culturally relevant outreach to high-risk communities**, including those disproportionately impacted by evictions. This can be accomplished by partnering with trusted networks and institutions to co-design outreach strategies and help connect people with prevention services. Outreach should be proactive, frequent, consistent, and offered through multiple communication channels and languages. Effective outreach should build trust and establish rapport with individuals who may not have a history of seeking help.

By implementing these actions, the CoC can ensure that prevention services are accessible to people most at risk of falling into homelessness, and empower grassroots networks and institutions to connect people with prevention services when a housing crisis occurs.

19b: Target supports to people most at risk of homelessness

Targeting supports to households most at risk of homelessness allows the CoC to maximize the impact of limited resources and prevent homelessness before it occurs. To ensure that financial support reaches people who are at the highest risk of becoming unhoused, the CoC, supported by the Prevention Committee, will take the following actions:

- ▶ **Conduct analysis of prevention programs to assess local needs and establish a prevention prioritization mechanism.** To ensure people most likely to become homeless are being prioritized, the CoC will analyze existing data and collaborate with traditional prevention providers and system partners develop a prevention prioritization mechanism that uses data and best practices to eliminate biases and ensure that households at the highest risk of homelessness are given priority. The screening process will take into account specific vulner-

abilities that increase the likelihood of homelessness and strategies that are most effective in addressing needs in a timely manner.

- › **Identify opportunities to co-locate services with systems of care that touch homeless services**, particularly trusted resources for people at risk or experiencing homelessness. These include faith-based organizations, PUSD and PCC, local healthcare providers, and victim service providers. Co-locating prevention services will increase accessibility, which in turn may increase program participation rates.
- › **Identify ways to offer more flexibility in financial assistance & support organizations with implementation.** Homelessness prevention programs that offer more flexibility can better address unique individual needs. For example, a single parent with children may need more support with childcare and transportation, while a person with a disability may need help accessing healthcare services. By offering more flexible financial assistance beyond rental assistance, programs can help address these underlying issues and work towards greater equity.
- › **Meet the non-financial needs of people who are struggling with housing insecurity.** While financial assistance can help people maintain or obtain housing, it may not address the underlying causes of housing insecurity. Meeting non-financial needs can empower individuals to take control of their lives and make positive changes. For example, providing job training, education, or access to social services can help individuals build skills and resources that can improve long-term success and stability. Other examples include interventions that stabilize support or kinship networks, including chosen families.
- › **Ensure collaboration between Prevention and Equity Committees.** To ensure that inclusive strategies are implemented, it is important to include prevention leads in the CoC's Equity Committee, as well as equity leaders on the Prevention Committee. This will facilitate cross-collaboration between the two committees and enable a more comprehensive approach to addressing equity issues within the CoC. By including prevention leads in the Equity Committee, the CoC can ensure that strategies to prevent homelessness are grounded in equity principles. At the same time, by including equity leaders on the Prevention Committee, the CoC can ensure that prevention efforts are informed by an equity lens. Ultimately, this approach will lead to more effective and inclusive solutions to homelessness.

Strategy 20: Reduce Inflows to Homelessness

In addition to providing direct support to people facing housing crises through traditional prevention programs, the CoC also works to actively curtail inflows to homelessness. This work involves addressing structural factors and strengthening protective measures to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless.

20a: Collaborate with system partners

To help reduce inflows to homelessness and identify people who may need assistance before they seek services, the CoC will develop partnerships with entities that can proactively provide referrals. Partnerships may include public benefits programs such as the Department of Public Social Services, Medi-Cal, the Social Security Administration, and the Housing Authority, as well as private-sector institutions such as landlords and utility providers. In addition, the CoC will take the following actions:

- › **Support hospitals in improving discharge planning for people at-risk of homelessness.** One of the key roles of hospitals is to provide acute care and develop a discharge plan that meets the unique needs of each patient. However, for patients at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness, this can be a significant challenge. To

ensure strengthened assistance, the CoC will work to support hospitals (i.e. Huntington Hospital) in improving their discharge planning processes. This includes working with hospital staff to evaluate patients' desires for placement prior to discharge and assisting them in making appropriate arrangements for post-hospital care. By collaborating with hospitals, the CoC can better serve people at risk of homelessness and ensure that they receive the support they need to maintain stable housing.

- › **Strengthen the connection between existing prevention services and reentry and probation providers.** Ensuring effective reintegration into the community is paramount for people leaving the criminal justice system. To more effectively assist people at risk of homelessness after release from incarceration, the CoC will collaborate closely with reentry and probation providers. This collaborative effort will focus on enhancing transition planning procedures and ensuring seamless connections to services.
- › **Collaborate with the foster care system in improved discharge planning.** The CoC will help prevent homelessness among youth transitioning out of the foster care system by developing collaborative relationships with foster care providers to ensure youth transitioning out of the foster care system have access to safe, stable, and affordable housing. The CoC will also work to identify resources such as HUD vouchers for foster youth and family reunification funds to ensure targeted services are available for emancipated youth.

20b: Strengthen tenant supports

Many individuals and families face housing insecurity due to underlying barriers such as poverty, lack of affordable housing, and systemic inequities. These challenges become even more significant when households experience evictions or other forms of housing loss, which can have severe financial consequences, including increased debt, lower credit scores, and difficulty accessing future housing. Tenant supports that address these issues are crucial to help individuals and families overcome barriers that put them at increased risk of becoming homeless.

To strengthen tenant supports, the CoC will undertake the following actions in collaboration with the Prevention Committee:

- › **Increase community awareness of legal services.** To increase community awareness of the legal services that provide critical support to households facing evictions, the CoC will collaborate with the Prevention Committee to develop a communications plan. Central to this plan will be forging partnerships with trusted networks and institutions to disseminate information and ensuring the online resource center offers comprehensive information on available services.
- › **Work with community groups representing tenants to develop a tenant protections information section in the online resource center.** This section will offer tenants and landlords a self-serve online library of accurate and up-to-date information on tenant rights, available resources, and common misinformation. By providing people with timely access to crucial resource information, this knowledge base may help prevent eviction proceedings or ensure access to services in a more timely manner.
- › **Advocate for stronger tenant protection policies.** In collaboration with the Ad Hoc Community Education Committee, the CoC will develop educational tools on the impact of tenant protection policies to build political will towards strengthening these protections.

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES



Strategy	
Strategy 1: Address System Needs	1a: Invest in 150 additional units of permanent housing
	Develop new site-based permanent supportive housing (90 units)
	Dedicate 45 new vouchers to scattered-site permanent housing
	Fund a new 15-household rapid re-housing program
	1b: Invest in 70 new year-round emergency shelter beds
	Maintain 20 year-round motel vouchers
Develop two new 25-bed year-round emergency shelters	
Strategy 1: Address System Needs	1c: Create an Online Resource Center
	Ensure easy to access information on supports
	Centralized information on discrimination
Strategy 2: Stngthen collaboration at all levels	2a: Create a unified approach to ending homelessness
	Create four new action-oriented CoC committees
	Advance the work of Built for Zero
	2b: Increase collaboration between City departments
	Reestablish a quarterly inter-departmental meeting on homelessness
	2c: Establish a Community Education Ad Hoc Committee
	2d: Strengthen alignment + coordination w/ regional partners
	Re-establish a quarterly meeting with the four LA County CoCs
	Establish a Planning Committee with leaders in homeless services
	Work to advance policy and planning efforts in the SGV
Strategy 2: Stngthen collaboration at all levels	2e: Promote alignment + coordination with system partners
	Include cross-system leadership in CoC Committees
	Include system partners at regular service provider meetings
	Identify opportunities to co-locate services with system partners
	Enter into data-sharing agreements with cross-sector partners
Strategy 3	3: Expand Access to Mental Health & Substance Use Services
	Advocate for low-barrier services at the City's new facility
	Build partnerships and expand street medicine
	Identify new access pathways through collaborative partnerships
	Ensure continuity of svcs for people entering treatment programs



SYSTEMWIDE
PLANNING

	Strategy
4: Strengthen homeless sector workforce	4a: Strengthen support for the homeless service workforce Reduce administrative burden for service providers
	4b: Create career pathways for people with lived experience Provide workforce development opportunities Support peer mentorship programs Provide training for supervision of staff with lived experience
	Strategy 5
	5: Increase the supply of affordable housing in Pasadena Advocate for an increase in HUD’s project-based voucher cap Promote increasing the supply of affordable housing in Pasadena Maintain the existing supply of affordable housing



	Strategy
Strategy 6: Create infrastructure to support equity-focused leadership	6a: Establish an Equity Committee to guide the CoC’s assessment and reform process
	6b: Ensure people with lived experience play a leadership role
	Establish a Lived Experience Advisory Board
	Support lived experience peer advocate programs
	Expand representation in the CoC Board
	Develop a compensation policy for people with lived experience
Strategy 7	6c: Provide culturally relevant and responsive training
	Create, provide, and require ongoing training that focuses on equity
	Tailor equity training to individual roles in the CoC
Strategy 8: Strengthen support for marginalized groups	Contract with experienced trainers who represent diverse perspectives
	Strengthen the process for reporting and responding to unfair or discriminatory treatment
	Create a section in the online resource center on housing discrimination
	Develop a low-barrier online survey for program participants to share feedback anonymously
	Improve the CoC’s system for responding to reports of discrimination
	8a: Strengthen support for Black people facing discrimination in the private housing market
	Create educational materials on tenant protections for landlords + tenants
	Develop a housing resource toolkit for clients that supports case managers
Strengthen housing navigation supports	
Advocate for “Fair Chance to Housing” protections	
Ensure ongoing housing retention support	
8b: Ensure that Hispanic and Latino people have equitable access to homeless services	
Effective + culturally relevant outreach w/ Hispanic + Latino communities	
Encourage staff hiring that reflects client demographics + Spanish speakers	



EQUITY &
RESPECT

	Strategy
Strategy 8: Strengthen support for marginalized groups (continued)	8c: Provide strengthened support for other marginalized groups
	Prioritize accessibility in all aspects of the CoC's programs, policies, & housing
	Require the implementation of client-driven trauma-informed care
	Build in flexibility for rental and financial assistance.
	Strengthen lease-up support for families & multigenerational hhds
	Foster partnerships between immigration legal aid and homeless svcs
	Strengthen cross-system partnerships to ensure wrap-around supports
Support the development of specialized services	
Strategy 9	Measure progress in improving equity
	Ongoing disparity analyses
	Incorporate analysis of disparities in language access
	Measure progress in eliminating disparities
	Community education to build shared understanding of disparities



	Strategy
Strategy 10: Strengthen Response Coordination and Referral System	10a: Develop a more accessible, transparent, & timely referral system
	Establish an online resource center for crisis services
	Create a communications plan for the online resource center
	10b: Strengthen collaboration between crisis response providers
	Develop a system for real-time communication, collaboration, and information sharing
	Create physical space for response coordination and referrals
Strategy 11	11: Target street outreach to equitably meet the needs of unhoused people
	Support person-centered, housing-focused & trauma-informed street outreach
	Increase collaboration between street outreach teams
	Enhance the quality of data collection, outcome tracking, and reporting
Strategy 12	12: Strengthen and Expand Emergency Shelter & Interim Housing Programs
	Reduce barriers to shelter
	Encourage safe and appropriate shelter diversion
	Advocate for the creation of recuperative care (medical respite) beds
Strategy 13	13: Ensure Shelters are Safe, Secure, and Clean
	Develop quality assurance standards
	Increase storage opportunities
	Foster relationships with motel owners
	Ensure standards are met at facility-based shelter
Strategy 14	14: Strengthen and Increase Access to Essential Services
	Identify and develop partnerships with trusted networks and institutions
	Increase the dependability of crisis services (permanent + co-location)
	Increase the number of safe parking program sites
	Offer training for essential service providers



HOUSING & SUPPORTS

	Strategy
Strategy 15: Improve the Coordinated Entry System	15a: Improve the CES process
	Ensure equity in the administration of the assessment tool
	Formalize the process for case conferencing to improve equity
	15b: Strengthen education on CES and transparency of the system
	Develop user-friendly communications materials on the CES process
	Establish a process for CES feedback
	15c: Increase access to CES
	Develop a CES section in the online resource center
	Advocate for the development of a multi-service center
Raise community awareness of CES and the online resource center	
Strategy 16	16: Strengthen Lease-up Support
	Develop a housing resource workshop or toolkit
	Strengthen and expand landlord support
Strategy 17: Strengthen + Expand PH Programs	17a: Expand PSH, RRH, and other long-term subsidy programs
	Create 150 additional units of permanent housing
	Promote shared housing to increase client rental options & affordability
	Generate support for the creation of new funding sources for PH
	Explore partnerships with providers to master lease apartments.
	17b: Ensure adequate supportive services in PH programs
	Strengthen partnerships between providers of housing, aging and disability services, and health care
	Connect agencies to technical assistance to bill to new funding streams
	Support the development and expansion of peer advocate programs
	17c: Expand support for tenants moving on from PSH
Create formalized Moving On programs	
Ensure sustained services for people transitioning from site-based PSH	



Strategy	
18	18: Establish a Prevention Committee to Lead Efforts in Reducing Inflows to Homelessness
Strategy 19: Enhance Prevention Efforts	19a: Increase access to prevention services
	Develop a prevention section within the online resource center
	Provide effective and culturally relevant outreach
	19b: Target support to people most at risk of becoming homeless
	Assess local needs and establish a prevention prioritization mechanism
	Identify opportunities to co-locate services with system partners
Strategy 20: Reduce Inflows	Identify ways to offer more flexibility in financial assistance
	Meet the non-financial needs of people who are struggling with housing insecurity
	Ensure collaboration between Prevention and Equity Committees
	20a: Collaborate with system partners
	Support hospitals in improving discharge planning
	Strengthen the connections with reentry and probation providers
Collaborate w/ foster care system in improved discharge planning	
Strategy 20: Reduce Inflows	20b: Strengthen Tenant Supports
	Increase community awareness of legal services
	Develop a tenant protections info section in the online resource center
	Advocate for stronger tenant protection policies

GLOSSARY

ADU: Accessory Dwelling Units

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

CALAIM: California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal

CES: Coordinated Entry System

CESTRR: LA County CES Triage Tool Research and Refinement

COC: Continuum of Care

DCHS: California Department of Health Care Services

DMH: Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health

DPSS: Department of Public Social Services

DV: Domestic Violence

HMIS: Homeless Management Information System

HUD: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (federal)

LA-HOP: Los Angeles County Homeless Outreach Portal

LAHSA: Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

LEAP: Lived Experience Advisory Panel

LEAB: Lived Experience Advisory Board

LGBTQ+: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and other sexual identities

PCC: Pasadena City College

PH: Permanent Housing

PHA: Public Housing Authority

PSH: Permanent Supportive Housing

PUSD: Pasadena Unified School District's

RRH: Rapid Rehousing

TAY: Transition Age Youth (ages 18-24)

VI-SPDAT: Vulnerability Index and Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool

WIC: Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

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- Housing Rights Center
- Housing Works
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- Lake Avenue Church
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- LA County Department of Children and Family Services
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- Pasadena Tenants Union
- Pasadena Unified School District
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