



Agenda Report

April 30, 2018

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Housing and Career Services Department
SUBJECT: **RESULTS OF THE 2018 PASADENA HOMELESS COUNT**

RECOMMENDATION:

The following report is for information only; no City Council action is required.

BACKGROUND:

On the evening of January 23rd and the morning of January 24th, the City of Pasadena, in coordination with Urban Initiatives, conducted the 2018 Pasadena Homeless Count. The count measures the prevalence of homelessness in the City by collecting information on unsheltered and sheltered homeless persons. While this one-night count offers a snapshot of homelessness, the number of people who are homeless on any given night fluctuates throughout the year.

The unsheltered count surveys homeless individuals and families most visible to the public including those sleeping outdoors, on the street, or in parks or vehicles, etc. The sheltered count includes homeless individuals and families in temporary shelter, such as those residing in emergency shelter, transitional housing, or those using hotel/motel vouchers. The count does not include persons who are living in overcrowded housing or at-risk of homelessness as the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) does not include these persons among their definition of homelessness.

As the lead agency for the Pasadena Continuum of Care (CoC), the City of Pasadena is responsible for reporting the findings of the Homeless Count to HUD. Data from the Homeless Count is also included in the CoC's annual funding application, which is responsible for over \$3.2 million in federal funding for homeless services in the City.

RESULTS OF THE COUNT:

A growing number of people in Pasadena are homeless. On the night of the 2018 Pasadena Homeless Count, there were 677 people experiencing homelessness, 18% more than in 2017 (575).

- **The sharpest increases were seen among those living on the streets**, in parks, encampments, vehicles, or other places not meant for human habitation. During the 2018 Homeless Count, 462 people were living on the streets, or 68% of the total

homeless population. That number is 33% higher than the number of unsheltered persons in 2017 (347).

- **People living on the streets are our neighbors.** Half (50%) of respondents living on the street were living in Pasadena when they most recently lost their housing, up slightly from 2016 (48%).
- **The homeless population in Pasadena is getting older.** Between 2016 and 2018, there was a 65% increase in the number of persons over age 50 who were homeless; from 153 in 2016 to 253 in 2018.
- **Impacts of the housing crisis evident.** There was a significant increase (36%) in the number of persons who did not meet HUD's definition of *chronic* homelessness, meaning they were not homeless for more than 12 months or did not have a qualifying disability (including substance use or mental illness). For this population, high rents and a shortage of housing caused them to fall into homelessness. In 2016, the housing cost burden for the lowest-income renter households in Pasadena exceeded 100%, meaning their income was not enough to cover rent.

The full report is available on the Pasadena Partnership to End Homelessness website, at www.pasadenapartnership.org/homeless-count-reports.

PROGRESS WITH TARGET SUBPOPULATIONS:

The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness identifies four homeless subpopulations with particular challenges or needs. Progress and recommendations for each subpopulation include:

- **Homeless Veterans.** Veterans represent less than five percent of the homeless population (31) and have decreased in number by 49% since 2013. Much of this decrease came from the opening of several nearby supportive housing projects for Veterans in 2016. Future reductions depend on strengthening landlord partnerships as well as developing new supportive housing.
- **Chronically Homeless.** The number of chronically homeless persons (164) has decreased by 27% since 2016 (224) and now accounts for just under a quarter (24%) of the total homeless population. This indicates that Pasadena's focus on Supportive Housing for those exhibiting the highest level of need is working.
- **Homeless Families with Children.** The number of homeless families remained unchanged at 37; this subpopulation included 104 individuals, 15% of the 2018 homeless population. Looking forward, this number is expected to remain relatively flat, as Pasadena's emergency shelter and transitional housing programs for families provide beds for those who are homeless regionally, not just in Pasadena.
- **Homeless Unaccompanied and Parenting Youth.** While homeless youth represent just over 6% of the total homeless population, there was a 23% increase in the number of unaccompanied and parenting youth in Pasadena (43). More rapid re-housing with broader educational and employment support services targeted specifically towards this population is needed.

PASADENA'S EFFORTS TO END HOMELESSNESS:

Since 2011, Pasadena's crisis response system has ensured prompt connectivity to rapid re-housing and supportive housing services through coordinated entry, street outreach and housing navigation. Providing access to housing, without preconditions, along with supportive services (known as Housing First) can ensure that 90% of people who were homeless remain housed, even those with severe substance use and mental health conditions. Under this service model emergency shelters and basic services are a pathway to housing, providing assessment for permanent housing.

- In 2017, 161 people who were homeless in Pasadena were housed through rapid rehousing or supportive housing programs in Pasadena and throughout the County.
- While the level of need is outpacing the amount of housing resources available, the 27% reduction in chronic homelessness over the past two years is a sign that the response system designed to help those most in need is working.

MORE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS ARE NEEDED:

More supportive housing is needed to offset recent increases in homelessness, especially among the elderly. Supportive housing is a cost-effective intervention that offers long-term support to high-needs individuals. These individuals are often intensive and costly users of public services, particularly health care.

Supportive housing has been an effective tool at combating chronic homelessness in Pasadena. Over the last five years, Pasadena has increased the supply of supportive housing. As a result, chronic homelessness in Pasadena has decreased 15% annually for the past two years even as it increased by 12% nationwide (from 2016 to 2017).

Supportive housing can be offered through rental vouchers that are used in the private rental market, or bricks-and-mortar projects. Rental vouchers, however, are becoming increasingly difficult to use in Pasadena's competitive rental market. Thus, the private rental market alone cannot absorb the growing need for supportive housing. Even with additional Measure H funding (of which the City is advocating for a fair share) and supportive housing vouchers, more bricks-and-mortar supportive housing projects are needed.

NEED FOR EXPANDED RAPID REHOUSING:

Recent growth in the number of people who have been pushed into homelessness as a result of the housing crisis highlights the need for longer-term rapid rehousing with more intensive case management and support services to help individuals and families regain self-sufficiency.

Respectfully submitted,



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