

RECEIVED

2026 JUN 22 AM 8:47

CITY CLERK  
CITY OF PASADENA

SONJA K. BERNDT  
Pasadena, CA

June 20, 2026

Mayor Victor Gordo  
Members of the Pasadena City Council  
Pasadena, CA  
(By Email)  
(By Email [correspondence@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:correspondence@cityofpasadena.net))

Re: City Council Meeting June 22, 2026, Agenda Item #24: 2026 Pasadena Point-in-Time Homeless Count Results

Dear Mayor Gordo and Members of the City Council:

I am a long-time resident of Pasadena and an advocate for the unhoused residents of our City. I was also a team lead for the 2026 Point-in-Time Homeless Count. This letter is to express my deep concerns regarding the results of the 2026 Point-in-Time Count of those experiencing homelessness in our City. The results show that our City is making no meaningful progress in ending our homelessness crisis and that substantially more City-generated funding for housing and services is urgently needed to address it.

A. The Point-in-Time Count is Likely an Undercount of Persons Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness in Our City

The 2026 Point-in-Time Count was conducted on January 21 and January 22, 2026. Total unhoused persons numbered 577, down only four persons from last year. The Point-in-Time Count of those who were **unsheltered** on the night of the Count (i.e., those sleeping on the street or in vehicles) was 322, a decrease of 20 persons from last year. The **sheltered** Count was 255, an increase of 7% from last year. (Agenda Report, p.2.)

It is important to note at the outset that it is a virtual certainty that the **unsheltered** count is an undercount. This is because the City's Bad Weather Shelter was open on the night of the Point-in-Time Count even though the criteria for opening that shelter were not met that night. All those in the Bad Weather Shelter on the night of the Point-in-Time Count, were counted as "sheltered" even though that may have been the only night they were sheltered. Additionally, if the City had a number of motel vouchers on the night of the Count, all persons who used vouchers on that one night are counted as "sheltered" even if they had been unsheltered for months or even years and even if they received no further motel vouchers after the night of the Count.

Thus, although the Agenda Report states “[t]he number of people sheltered reached a 10-year high” and “[t]he number of people sheltered in motels has doubled since 2024” (Agenda Report, p. 2), understand that this comparative data only applies to the nights of the Point-in-Time Counts. It does not mean that there has been an increase in motel shelter **on any given night**. This is critical because our unsheltered folks are the ones who suffer on our very unsafe streets every day.

B. The Results of the 2026 Point-in-Time Count Do Not Bode Well for Meeting the City’s Homelessness Benchmarks

One of the goals of the 2023-2028 Homelessness Plan prepared by the Pasadena Partnership is a 50% reduction in annual homelessness by the end of 2028.<sup>1</sup> Per staff’s report to the Housing, Homelessness and Planning (HHP) Committee on February 17, 2026, the **2024** (Year 2) target was a 21% reduction, but only a 13% reduction was achieved. (Timestamp 5:41.)<sup>2</sup> The **2025** Annual Homeless Count has not yet been presented by staff.

The goal for the Homelessness Plan’s Crisis Response action area is “Year-round shelter beds for 80% of people who are unhoused **on any given night**” by the end of 2028. The target for 2025 was year-round shelter beds for 45% of our unhoused residents, but that goal was missed by 7%. (Timestamp 28:52.) Significantly, 2027’s target is shelter beds for 69% of unhoused persons **on any given night!** (*Ibid.*)

In the “Future Outlook” of the Agenda Report, staff notes that Door of Hope’s David & Katherine Lee Home is expected to add units of transitional housing (20 per Housing Department’s FY2027 budget) and open in early 2027. Staff also cites to the Ramona project which is expected to break ground in 2027. The Disposition and Development Agreement for this project was approved by the City Council **five years ago** and it remains mostly a weed lot after all these years. The project, with a reported ballooning estimated cost of \$83.1 million, will have only 48 units set aside for seniors experiencing homelessness, and not until possibly in 2028.

Significantly, the City is losing 142 units of permanent supportive housing because Centennial Place is being remodeled and repurposed for senior housing instead of housing for formerly unhoused persons. While the previous tenants may have all been

---

<sup>1</sup> According to the Pasadena Partnership’s Homelessness Plan, the Pasadena Continuum of Care, formally known as the Pasadena Partnership, “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.” But is not responsible for outcomes and is not accountable to the City Council or to Pasadena residents. The Annual Homelessness Count measures “all individuals who experienced homelessness over the course of a calendar year.” (Agenda Report, p. 1.)

<sup>2</sup> All further timestamp references are to the video recording of the 2/17/2026 HHP Committee meeting.

moved to other units of housing in our City, that does not change the fact that those 142 units are lost to those still languishing on our streets.

C. The City Must Appropriate Additional Funding from City-Generated Resources to Fill Expected Gaps in Other Funding the City Has Relied Upon for Years

The Agenda Report notes the following:

Anticipated funding cuts and reductions in County-administrated services will significantly impact Pasadena’s homeless response system. . . . Pasadena’s homeless services funding is anticipated to be significantly reduced across federal, state and County sources, further straining local system capacity.

(Agenda Report, p. 3.) For years, the City has failed to invest in nearly enough shelter beds and interim housing for the very long waits to permanent housing. Year after year, the Housing Department receives *de minimus* General Fund appropriations while the Pasadena Police Department (PPD) receives a grossly disproportionate level of General Fund appropriations. Critical services for our unhoused and especially our unsheltered residents are vastly underfunded because our Housing Department receives only “crumbs” from City-generated sources to serve our most vulnerable residents.

After much discussion and pushback this year, the City has appropriated an initial \$2 million to start developing a year-round shelter. While this is a start, the likely cost for this project will be much more. Additional City-generated funding must be appropriated on an urgent basis.

While balancing the FY2027 budget has been challenging, cost savings could be achieved by decreasing the number of Pasadena police officers while maintaining public safety in our City. In just the first six months of FY 2025, documents show over 4,100 calls for service listed as “TRST,” i.e., “transient” related. Instead of incurring the huge expense of sworn officer responses to calls for service related to unhoused individuals, PROVIDE HOUSING FOR THEM in the first place! This would decrease PPD salary and pension costs and at the same time alleviate suffering and promote health and wellbeing. Moreover, these calls for service may not need responses by uniformed police officers.

D. Conclusion

The Agenda Report notes “the City remains committed to strengthening its homelessness response system” even with looming County and federal cuts. (Agenda Report, p. 4.) But with this commitment there must come substantially more funding, transparency and accountability. As Mayor Gordo recently affirmed, the Pasadena Partnership is not responsible for results. It is the City that is responsible for managing homelessness resources, for strategies and for outcomes. (Timestamp 12:53.) That statement along

with the creation of the Housing, Homelessness and Planning Committee and the initial \$2 million in funding for a year-round shelter give me hope that we can finally make meaningful progress in housing those experiencing homelessness in our City. Thank you for your time and consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

/s/

Sonja K. Berndt

Pasadena

Cc: James Wong  
Housing Director