

*City of Arts & Innovation*

# Housing and Homelessness Committee Memorandum

**TO: HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE DATE: JANUARY 26, 2026**

**FROM HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES WARDS: ALL**

**SUBJECT: WORKSHOP ON RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS**

**ISSUE:**

Receive an update on the City's current response to homelessness and options to improve outcomes.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Housing and Homelessness Committee receive and file an update on the City's response to homelessness and provide direction for any improvements or changes to the current response plan.

**BACKGROUND:**

Homelessness continues to be one of the most pressing social challenges facing our communities. Over the past several years, shifts in economic conditions, housing availability, and public health crises have contributed to rising rates of homelessness nationwide. Understanding these trends and the complex causes behind them is essential to developing effective, compassionate, and sustainable solutions.

This workshop is designed to provide a clear overview of current homelessness trends and root causes, including the impacts of housing shortages, unemployment, mental health challenges, substance use disorders, and the growing number of individuals and families living on the edge of financial instability. By grounding our conversation in real data and lived experience, we aim to build a shared understanding of the challenges we face.

We will also highlight what we are currently doing to address homelessness, including outreach efforts, shelter and housing programs, prevention strategies, cross-agency coordination, and support services that help individuals stabilize and rebuild their lives. This is an opportunity to reflect on what is working well, where gaps remain, and how we can strengthen our collective response.

Finally, we will preview a series of upcoming activities and initiatives aimed at reducing homelessness and supporting long-term solutions—such as new housing projects, community partnerships, expanded services, and opportunities for engagement.

By the end of this workshop, participants will have a deeper understanding of the issues, a clearer picture of current efforts, and a shared vision for the steps ahead. Our goal is to foster collaboration, enhance our strategies, and move closer to ensuring that every individual in our community has a safe and stable place to call home.

## **Homelessness Trends and Causes**

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Homelessness remains a persistent challenge across the United States, affecting communities of all sizes. National data show that the number of people experiencing homelessness has grown steadily over the past decade, driven by factors such as housing affordability, unemployment, and systemic inequities. While the rate of growth varies by region, homelessness is widely recognized as a national problem, not one confined to any single city or county.

California has one of the largest populations of people experiencing homelessness in the country. The state's high housing costs, large population, and structural factors contribute to both the widespread and concentrated nature of homelessness. Riverside County reflects these broader statewide trends, though local conditions continue to shape the experience of homelessness for residents here.

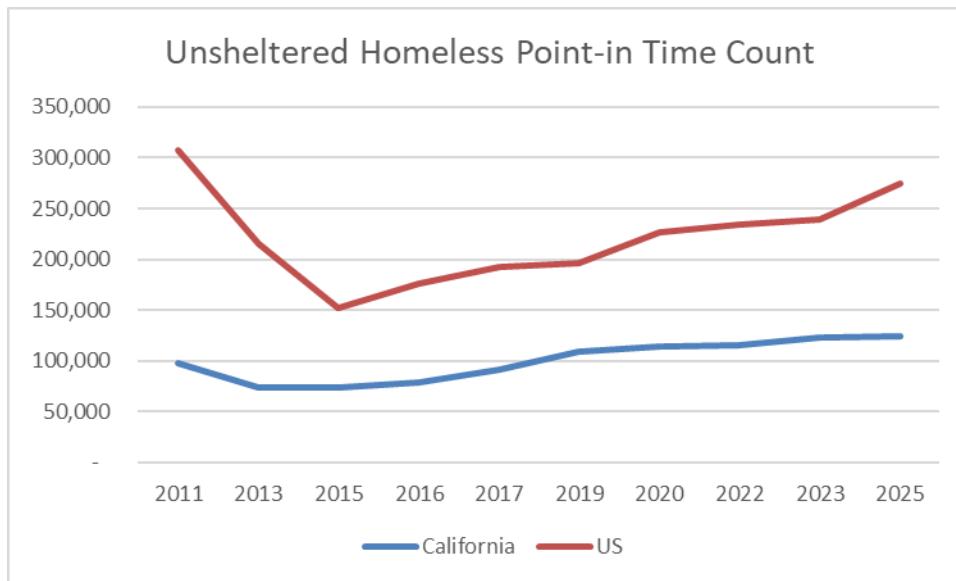
### ***Primary Causes of Homelessness in 2025***

- ***Lack of affordable housing:*** The most significant factor contributing to homelessness is the persistent shortage of affordable housing. According to the California Housing Partnership (CHP) Riverside County 2025 Affordable Housing Needs (AHN) Report, 54,066 low-income renter households lack access to an affordable home.
- ***Rising rent prices:*** Continuously increasing rent worsens housing affordability. According to the same CHP report, to afford the average monthly asking rent of \$1,993, Riverside County renters must earn \$38.33 per hour, or 2.3 times the state minimum wage.
- ***Unemployment and Underemployment:*** Job loss, underemployment and unstable employment remain major causes of housing instability. Without consistent, full-time employment, many individuals and families struggle to cover basic housing costs.
- ***Mental Health and Substance Abuse Issues:*** A substantial portion of people experiencing homelessness face mental health disorders and/or substance use issues. In many cases, limited access to treatment and support services exacerbates their vulnerability.
- ***Domestic Violence:*** Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness for women. Approximately one in four women who are homeless cite partners abuse as the primary reason they lost stable housing. As of 2024, women continued to experience intimate partner violence at the highest rates among all demographics.

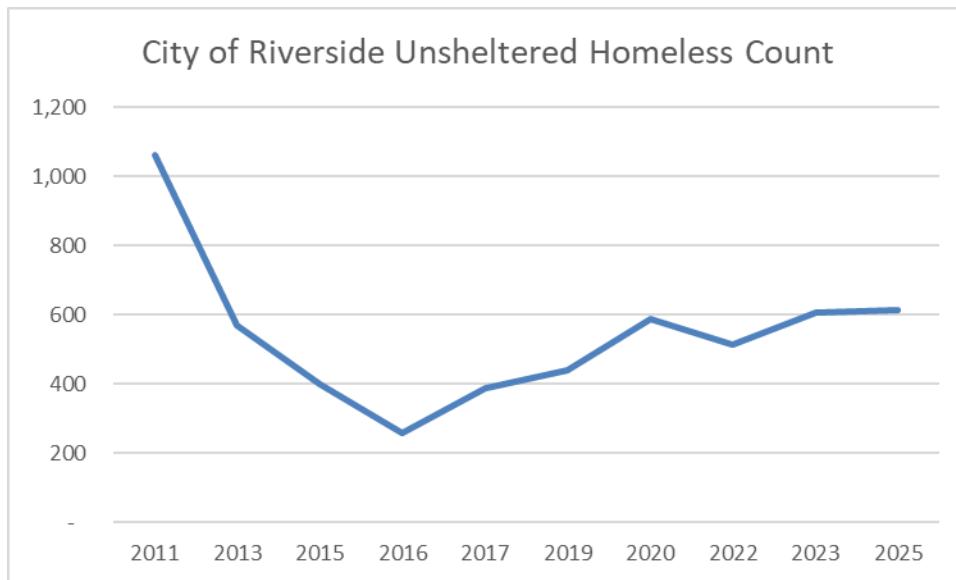
Riverside has experienced significant increases in homelessness in recent years, reflecting both state and national trends. However, 2025 data indicate that while the overall number of people experiencing homelessness remains high, growth has leveled off for the first time in several years. This stabilization may reflect the impact of targeted programs, housing initiatives, and collaborative efforts to connect residents with services, though substantial needs remain.

By framing Riverside's experience within the context of national and statewide trends, homelessness is a shared challenge requiring coordinated responses at every level. The charts below provide perspective on both the scale of the issue and the relative changes over time,

supporting informed policy and programs aimed at reducing homelessness in our community.



Every other year the city, in partnership with the County of Riverside, conducts a Homeless Point-in-Time (PIT) Count to count unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January.



At a per capita level of homelessness number, we are a larger city so we expect a larger number, but per capita we have fewer homeless people than other large cities:

CITY	POPULATION	UNSHeltered HOMELESS	% OF UNSHELTERED HOMELESS	PER CAPITAL HOMELESS POPULATION
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				(per 100,000 residents)
Riverside (2025)	318,858	614	0.19%	193
Anaheim (2024)	340,512	601	0.19%	176.5
Santa Ana (2024)	310,539	871	0.28%	358.3
Stockton (2024)	325,976	2,451	0.75%	751.6

## External Contribution to Homelessness

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### ***Robert Presley Detention Center***

The Robert Presley Detention Center (RPDC) is one of the largest correctional facilities in Riverside County and plays a measurable role in the inflow of individuals entering homelessness within the City of Riverside. Individuals released from custody often face significant barriers to securing stable housing, including limited income, minimal support networks, loss of employment during incarceration, and challenges accessing rental opportunities due to criminal history. These factors can place many individuals at heightened risk of homelessness upon release.

In Custody Services include the following:

- Healthcare by RNs or providers 24/7
- Comprehensive sub-specialty healthcare
- Telemedicine
- Behavioral Health
- Dental Care
- Optometry Clinic
- Radiology Services
- Orthopedic Clinic
- Physical assessments
- Lactation Program
- Overdose Prevention; Withdrawal & Addiction Treatment
- Infectious Disease Management
- Safety Cell Assessments
- Emergency Dept. & Hospital Care Coordination
- Comprehensive discharge planning and connection to services

In some cases, individuals are released without a safe or stable housing plan, resulting in an immediate need for shelter or street-based services. The lack of coordinated discharge planning, limited access to emergency housing resources, and the absence of family or community support further contribute to housing instability. As a result, a portion of those exiting RPDC may enter the homeless services system directly or shortly after release.

Addressing this inflow is an important component of the City's broader homelessness reduction strategy. Strengthening pre-release planning, improving coordination between correctional institutions and local service providers, and expanding access to reentry services including housing navigation, case management, and behavioral health support can significantly reduce the likelihood of individuals exiting custody into homelessness.

### ***Mental Health Facilities on County Farm Road***

Riverside County operates or contracts with service providers to operate several mental health and substance abuse programming facilities on County Farm Road in Ward 6. There are a total of 320 mental health and/or substance abuse treatment beds, 27 chairs at the mental health urgent care and sobering center, and 24 PSH units. These facilities are broken down below:

1. *Cedar House*. It offers a 24-hour therapeutic environment for individuals with disorders related to drug and alcohol abuse, providing both residential and outpatient treatment options. The facility is designed to support recovery through a comprehensive approach that includes mental health and substance abuse treatment, aiming to reduce recidivism and provide alternatives to incarceration. However, these programs are voluntary. The Arlington Recovery Community includes six (6) detox beds that have a four (4) day average length of stay and the Residential Substance Use Disorder Program has 48 beds with a maximum stay of 30 days. The Sobering Center has 15 chairs with a maximum stay of 24 hours. Sixty-two percent (62%) of the clients at the Sobering Center are from the City of Riverside.
2. *Riverside University Health (RUHS) Medical Center*.
  - a. The Emergency Treatment Services (ETS) a locked psychiatric hospital with 24 units. The maximum hold is 72 hours, and the average length of stay is 1.26 days.
  - b. The Inpatient Facility (ITF) is a locked crisis stabilization unit consisting of 77 beds with an average length of stay of 2.08 days.
  - c. Residential Education and Continuity Clinic (RECC) is an outpatient clinic that can serve up to 40 patients who live in Riverside and Corona with behavioral health and substance abuse disorder needs. The primary focus is on continuity of care for consumers discharged from inpatient Treatment Facility and Emergency Treatment Services. This facility is also a psychiatry residence teaching site.
3. *Mental Health Urgent Care*. The facility offers 12 chairs designed for people who do not go to ETS or ITF to be stabilized and prevents arrests and hospitalization.
4. *Crisis Residential Treatment*. The facility operates 15 beds, and two-week stays with a maximum limit of 30 days. It provides a homelike environment with psychiatric stabilization, which includes placement from urgent care.
5. *Restorative Transformative Center (RTC)*. The facility is a mental rehabilitation center with delayed egress to exit. It has 30 beds, with a maximum stay of 12 months.
6. *Cedar Glen Apartments*. Fifty (50) affordable housing units and 24 permanent supportive housing units.
7. *Mental Health Rehabilitation Center (MHRC)*. Locked down facility with psychiatric care and group therapy sessions that are court ordered. There are 79 beds with no time limit.

### ***Mental Health Facility on Franklin***

The Franklin Residential Care Facility and Behavioral Health Clinic, located at 3021 Franklin Avenue in Ward 2, opened in 2025 and serves as a supportive environment where individuals can find refuge, rebuild resilience, and work towards renewed independence. The facility includes 84

residential care beds, provides outpatient behavioral health services, and short-term recuperative care to help individuals stabilize and transition toward independent living.

### ***Expanded Outreach Services Countywide***

In 2020, Riverside County initiated contacts with nonprofit agencies to provide Street Outreach services across the region. Since then, the County has expanded its efforts and now partners with six (6) nonprofit organizations to deliver Street Outreach in all five (5) supervisorial districts. This expansion has increased the demand for shelter beds, substance use treatment placements, and long-term housing programs.

## **What We Are Doing to Address Homelessness**

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### ***Homelessness Action Plan***

On October 11, 2022, the City of Riverside adopted its Homelessness Action Plan (Action Plan – Attachment 1), which focuses on reducing homelessness by expanding affordable housing, increasing access to supportive services, and implementing a whole-person care approach. The Action Plan includes 30 actionable targets organized under six overarching goals. These targets are being advanced citywide through the provisions of affordable housing, supportive programming, and coordinated care strategies.

Implementation of the Action Plan is led by the Housing and Human Services Department (formerly the Office of Homeless Solutions), with support from multiple City departments, including Community and Economic Development, Office of Communications, Police, Fire, Public Works, and others.

The six goals of the Homelessness Action Plan are as follows:

1. Increase Housing Production with a Focus on Affordability
2. Increase the Availability of Services, with a Focus on Physical, Mental Health, and Substance Use Disorder Treatment
3. Prevent Homelessness
4. Increase Availability and Effectiveness of Emergency Shelter
5. Expand Public Awareness
6. Coordinated Regional Infrastructure

## ***OUTREACH SERVICES AND ADDRESSING ENCAMPMENTS***

### ***Power to Regulate – City of Grant Pass, Oregon V. Johnson***

On June 28, 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court held that a small Oregon town's enforcement of its anti-camping rules in public spaces is not prohibited by the Eighth Amendment's protections from cruel and unusual punishment.

States are prohibited from enforcing laws that criminalize mere status, but this does not restrict their authority to secure convictions for actions that society aims to prevent. This principle holds regardless of whether the defendant's actions could be seen as involuntary due to their status. California, like other states, can still prohibit public camping, even if the individual involved is homeless and their conduct could be considered involuntary to some extent. Therefore, in the case of prohibiting public camping, a person would not be cited for being homeless but for the specific act of camping in public, which is prohibited.

### ***Public Safety and Engagement Team (PSET)***

In 2019, the City of Riverside established PSET, a multi-department initiative designed to maintain order in public spaces while offering individuals experiencing homelessness a pathway to services, housing, and long-term stability. PSET members specialize in connecting individuals with resources and support while addressing unlawful panhandling, public camping, abandoned belongings, and related quality-of-life concerns. The program is funded through Measure Z.

PSET includes representatives from Riverside Police Department (RPD) and Housing and Human Services (HHS) Code Enforcement and Homeless Street Outreach. Additional partners that participate in PSET operations include the Justice Team Outreach, Riverside University Health Systems – BH (contracted substance-abuse counselors and peer support specialists through the Opioid Settlement Fund), Riverside County Probation, Caltrans, California Highway Patrol, BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Riverside County Transportation Commission, Riverside County Flood Control, and contracted trash-removal service providers.

In 2022, the City Council approved expanding PSET operations to include daily coverage of wildland areas. At that time, PSET was budgeted for eight (8) police officers, (16) outreach workers, six (6) code enforcement officers. Currently, the program is staffed with six (6) police officers, 10 outreach workers, five (5) code enforcement officers and one supervising code enforcement officer.

Below is breakdown of the PSET FY 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 Budget and Expenditures.

Category	FY 2023/2024 Budgeted	FY 2023/2024 Expenditures	FY 2024/2025 Budgeted	FY 2024/2025 Expenditures
Personnel	\$ 5,937,122.00	\$2,955,447.62	\$5,087,383.00	\$2,962,697.86
Non-Personnel	\$ 4,095,336.00	\$2,045,878.97	\$3,284,414.00	\$2,069,582.25
Capital Purchases	\$ 1,354,874.00	\$1,156,271.37	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Charges from Others	\$ 0.00	\$ 17,400.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,387,332.00</b>	<b>\$6,174,998.96</b>	<b>\$9,110,067.00</b>	<b>\$5,032,280.11</b>

Below is the PSET performance outcome for FY 2023/2024 and 2024/2025.

Performance Period	No. of Contacts	Accepted Services	Code Notices
July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025	6,833	391	2,386
July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	5,747	498	2,174
Citations	Arrests	Vehicle Tows	Tons Removed
166	678	38	496
206	476	11	577.36

### **Contracted Encampment Cleanup**

On February 27, 2024, the City entered into an agreement with Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District for the removal of illegally dumped materials from District-owned property. The contract, valued at \$225,000, remains in effect through June 30, 2027. This agreement enables PSET to address homeless encampments located on Flood Control property by providing outreach and services and, following a 72-hour tagging period, coordinating the removal of encampments, trash, and debris.

On August 27, 2025, the City entered into an agreement with the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to pilot a program focused on the removal of unpermitted encampments from State right-of-way. The agreement authorizes PSET to respond to encampments reported by Riverside residents and, in close coordination with Caltrans, to provide outreach and services prior to cleanup. After a 24-hour tagging period, PSET facilitates the removal of encampments, trash, and debris. The contract is valued at \$400,000 and is effective through June 30, 2027.

### **Riverside Access Center**

The City of Riverside Access Center, located at 2880 Hulen Place, serves as a central hub connecting community members experiencing homelessness with essential resources and supportive services. The Center provides case management to individuals living on the streets and functions as part of a larger services campus on Hulen Place that includes emergency shelter, transitional housing, outreach and a range of social support programs. Together, these services create a comprehensive one-stop access point for individuals facing homelessness or housing instability.

The Center also features an on-site pet kennel, allowing shelter participants to keep their pets with them while receiving services.

The Riverside Access Center and Homeless Street Outreach conduct Saturation Day events on a quarterly basis in the community based on hot spot areas. The last few Saturation Day performance outcomes are shown below.

## SATURATION DAY STATS | AUGUST 2025 WARDS 5 & 6

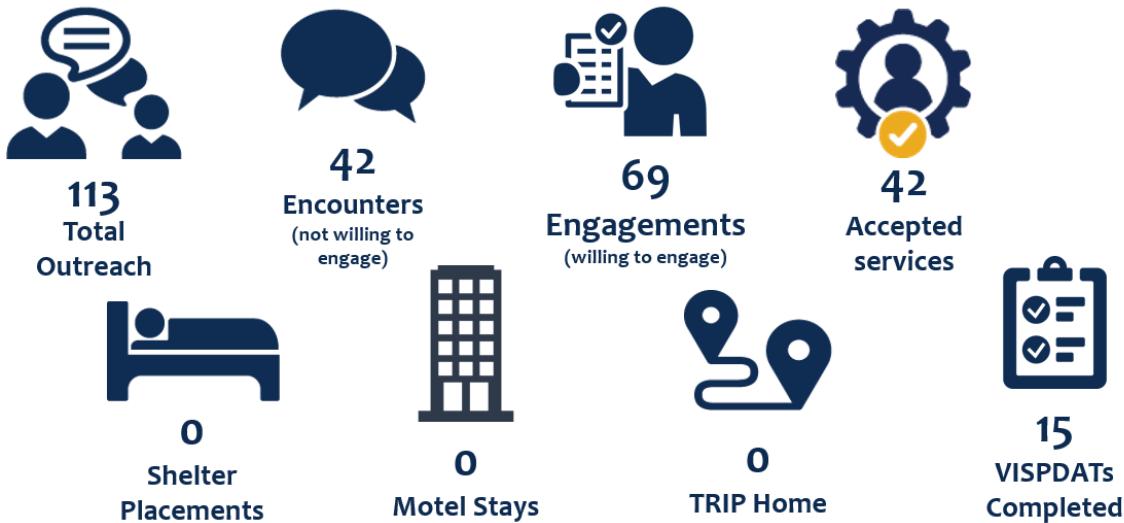


## SATURATION DAY STATS | SEPTEMBER 2025 WARDS 1 & 2



## SATURATION DAY STATS | NOVEMBER 2025

### WARD 1



### ***Emergency Shelters***

Emergency shelters play a vital role in providing immediate assistance and safety for individuals and families experiencing crisis. They offer protection from the elements and other hazardous conditions, serving as a safe haven where individuals can stabilize while awaiting additional support. Emergency shelters also contribute to emotional well-being by offering a sense of community and reducing feelings of isolation and fear.

Shelters vary in purpose and structure, with each type designed to meet the needs of specific populations and circumstances. Shelter stays are short-term in nature and typically range from 60 to 90 days. The city of Riverside has a total of 233 dedicated shelter beds in the following facilities:

Shelter	Population Served	No. of Beds	City Funded Beds
Bridge Housing (non-congregate shelter)	Unsheltered transitional-aged youth and adults	23	23
Family Promise	Unsheltered families	25 and 6 cribs	0
Illumination Foundation (recuperative care shelter)	Unsheltered, medically vulnerable homeless adults	50	0
Path of Life Emergency Shelter	Unhoused adults and transitional-aged youth	90	TAY: 8 Adults: 60
Path of Life Family Shelter	Unsheltered families with children	46	0
Operation Safe House Emergency Shelter	Homeless and runaway youth ages 12 -17	12	0
Operation Safe House Main Stay Shelter	Homeless youth ages 18-24	12	0

During FY 2024/2025, the City funded the Path of Life with HHAP grant funds, which provided 21 transitional aged youth (TAY) with a shelter bed of which 13 (62%) TAY did not exit back to the streets and provided 364 adults with a shelter bed of which 79 (22%) did not exit back to the streets. The Bridge

Housing Program was also funded with HHAP grant funds and was able to assist 116 adults, and 59 (51%) adults did not exit back to the streets.

### **Rental Assistance Programs**

The City of Riverside's Rental Assistance Program provides essential support to individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness by helping them obtain and maintain stable housing. The program combines financial assistance with comprehensive case management to address the barriers that prevent households from securing long-term housing stability.

The program serves homeless individuals and families referred to the Coordinated Entry System (CES), ensuring that assistance is directed to those with the highest needs and greatest vulnerability. Eligible participants may receive security deposit assistance, up to 12 months of rental assistance, and ongoing case management services.

Case management is provided by both City Housing and HHS case managers and contracted case managers through City Net. Together, they support participants by conducting housing assessments, connecting them to available units, developing individualized housing stability plans, and providing ongoing support to help households remain housed. Services may include budgeting and financial coaching, coordination with behavioral health and social service providers, linkage to income and employment resources, and routine follow-up to monitor progress.

By combining financial support with intensive case management and prioritizing referrals through the CES, the Rental Assistance Program ensures that the City's most vulnerable residents are connected to stable housing and supportive services. This approach strengthens the City of Riverside's homelessness response system and helps reduce the number of individuals entering or returning to homelessness.

The city also provides a \$600 incentive payment to landlords who sign a 12-month lease with rental assistance program participants. In FY 2024/2025, the City paid 17 landlords, expending \$10,200 in Measure Z funds.

During FY 2023/2024, the City assisted 61 households, expending \$819,097.39 in Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) grant, Continuum of Care, and Emergency Solutions Grant funds. In FY 2024/2025, the City assisted 97 households, expending \$1,032,276.81 in HHAP grant, Continuum of Care, Emergency Solutions Grant and Measure Z funds.

### **Senior Rental Assistance Programs**

Rental Assistance Programs are designed to support individuals and families experiencing homelessness by helping them secure and maintain stable housing. Through financial assistance, housing navigation, and case management services, the program removes barriers that often prevent people from transitioning out of homelessness. Rental assistance can include help with move-in costs, security deposits, utility deposits, and short- to medium-term rental subsidies. By providing both financial support and ongoing stabilization services, the programs promote long-term housing stability and reduces the likelihood of a return to homelessness.

The City of Riverside operates the following Rental Assistance Programs:

Criteria	Mobile Home Park Homeowners Rental Assistance	Senior Rental Assistance	Supplemental Senior Rental Assistance
City of Riverside resident	X	X	X
Age 62+	X	X	X
Paying more than 40% of household income towards rent	X	X	X
Income Level	50-80% of Area Median Income (AMI)	At or below 50% of AMI	At or below 50% of AM
Unhoused seniors		X	
Maximum assistance of \$600 per month			X

During FY 2023/2024, the City assisted 7 seniors, expending \$37,519.20 in General Funds. During FY 2024/2025, the City assisted 71 seniors, expending \$116,771.88 in General Funds.

### ***Homeless Prevention Program***

The City of Riverside's Homeless Prevention Program is designed to assist individuals and families who are at imminent risk of losing their housing, helping them avoid entering the homeless system altogether. By intervening early, the program addresses economic and situational factors that can lead to homelessness, such as temporary income loss, unexpected expenses, health emergencies, or unsafe living conditions.

The program provides short-term financial assistance such as help with up to three months with rent arrears, utility payments, security deposits, and other critical housing-related costs to stabilize households and prevent eviction.

Homeless prevention is a key component of the City's broader strategy to reduce overall homelessness. By helping households remain housed, the city decreases demand for emergency shelters, reduces the number of people entering homelessness, and supports long-term community stability.

Through these targeted efforts, the Homeless Prevention Program strengthens the City of Riverside's continuum of care and promotes housing stability for vulnerable households.

During FY 2023/2024, the City assisted 56 households, spending \$261,532.19 in Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) grant funds. In FY 2024/2025, the City assisted 69 households, expending \$287,703.58 in HHAP grant funds.

### ***Permanent Supportive Housing Program***

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is one of the most effective tools for addressing homelessness, particularly for individuals with chronic or complex needs. By combining long-term, affordable housing with supportive services, PSH helps stabilize individuals who face significant barriers to maintaining housing, including disabling conditions and behavioral health challenges. PSH not only promotes housing stability but also reduces reliance on emergency shelters, hospitals, and law enforcement, resulting in improved outcomes for individuals and cost savings for the community.

The City of Riverside has incorporated PSH as a key strategy within its homeless services system. Several PSH developments have been completed and are currently providing housing and supportive services to formerly homeless residents. Additionally, multiple PSH projects are under construction, which will significantly expand the City's long-term housing capacity for vulnerable populations.

PSH Development	No. of Units	Status Update
Mulberry Village	10	Fully leased. Case Management provided by the City of Riverside.
Oasis Senior Apartments (No Place Like Home and State of California – Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention)	46	Fully leased. Case management provided by Riverside University Health Systems – Behavioral Health and VA Loma Linda. PSH units covenanted by RUHS-BH and CalVet.
St. Michael's (No Place Like Home funded)	49	Fully leased. Case Management provided by RUHS-BH.
Mulberry Village	10	Fully leased. Case Management provided by the city.
Sunrise at Bogart	23	Under construction
Vista de La Sierra (No Place Like Home funded)	39	Fully leased. Case Management provided by RUSH-BH. PSH units covenanted by RUHS-BH.

### ***Affordable Housing***

Affordable housing is a critical tool in addressing homelessness because it directly targets one of the primary sources of housing instability: the shortage of units that individuals and families with low or extremely low incomes can afford. When housing costs rise faster than wages and the supply of low-cost units remain limited, more households become vulnerable to eviction, overcrowding, and ultimately homelessness.

By increasing the availability of affordable units, communities create stable housing options for those at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness. Affordable housing reduces rent burdens, prevents displacement, and supports long-term stability by giving individuals and families a secure foundation from which to access employment, education, healthcare, and supportive services.

The City of Riverside continues to expand its affordable housing pipeline as part of a comprehensive strategy to reduce and prevent homelessness. Currently, several affordable housing developments are under construction throughout the city, representing 503 affordable housing units and 169 PSH units. These projects will significantly increase local housing capacity and enhance the City's ability to serve residents with a range of income levels and supportive service needs.

### ***Coordinated Entry System – Community Queue***

Eligibility for PSH requires enrollment in the Coordinated Entry System, which begins with completion of a Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) by an outreach worker, shelter staff, or navigation center personnel. This pre-screening process

assesses an individual's health status, housing history, and social needs to help determine the most appropriate housing interventions. Once vital documents are obtained, clients are moved into the Community Queue to await housing placement.

As of November 20, 2025, a total of 312 individuals have been prescreened and preapproved for housing, 219 are awaiting a PSH referral, 87 are awaiting a RRH referral, and six (6) are awaiting an affordable housing referral. The age distribution of these individuals is as follows:

Age Group	No. of Individuals
62+	42
55-61	53
50-54	30
25-49	159
18-24	28

These numbers demonstrate a substantial demand for PSH within the city. Notably, 95 individuals are aged 55 or older, a group that often experiences complex health conditions, reduced mobility, and higher vulnerability to prolonged homelessness.

The volume and demographic makeup of the Community Queue clearly illustrate the urgent need to expand local PSH capacity to ensure that vulnerable residents can access stable, service-rich housing in a timely manner.

### ***Collaboration Efforts***

Addressing homelessness requires a coordinated and collaborative approach across multiple sectors, including local government, county partners, nonprofit service providers, faith-based organizations, and community stakeholders. The City of Riverside continues to strengthen these partnerships to expand service capacity, improve system coordination, and enhance outcomes for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The following initiatives highlight the City's ongoing collaborative efforts to align resources, reduce service gaps, and build a more effective regional response.

### ***Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Riverside County for a Coordinate Response to Homelessness***

On July 6, 2022, the City entered into a MOU with Riverside County for a Coordinated Response to Homelessness (Attachment 2). The MOU was created to ensure that all levels of government in the City and County are working together to prevent homelessness in Riverside and provide individuals in Riverside experiencing homelessness with shelter and services they need. The MOU included 16 action items. In 2022 – 2024, the City and County teams met on a quarterly basis to provide updates on the action items. HHS is in the process of rescheduling the December 2025 update meeting to January 2026.

### ***Mayor's Initiative to Ending Youth Homelessness***

In 2024, Mayor Patricia Lock-Dawson announced the Mayor's Initiative to Ending Youth Homelessness, stating that no young person should have to worry about shelter or sleep on the streets when they should be attending school or becoming a member of our workforce. We did it for veterans, and now we can do it for our youth.

HHS identified 21 partner organizations to support this initiative. Staff streamlined outreach, shelter, rental assistance and case management to ensure homeless youth were quickly connected to available resources. Weekly case-conferencing meetings were held to link youth to services, address barriers and monitor progress. These meetings were later reduced to every two weeks as the program approached functioning zero, a point at which more homeless youth were exiting the system than entering it.

The team achieved functioning zero for the homeless youth population in 2025. Following this success, staff collaborated with the County of Riverside to expand the initiative and case-conferencing process countywide.

### ***Forum on Homelessness***

Annually, HHS hosts the Forum on Homelessness, an event that brings together elected officials and city leaders from Riverside County cities to inventory programs and services offered as well as gaps in programming. The forum provides an opportunity for local cities to collaborate and address funding and legislative issues related to homeless programming. The 2024 Forum on Homelessness was attended by 19 cities where leaders discussed key topics including the role of law enforcement, best practices, gaps in services, partnerships, and funding resources. Staff is scheduling the next Forum on January 28, 2026, where staff will be sharing an asset map of services across the County and discuss gaps and needs in programs and services on a subregional level.

### ***Faith Summit***

On October 16, 2025, the city hosted a Faith-Based Summit with participation from more than 26 organizations. The Summit provided an overview of HHS programs, discussed opportunities for developing affordable housing on faith-owned property, and explored the potential for repurposing vacant buildings for a rotational emergency family shelter. The event also highlighted a community-driven housing donation program that supports individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness.

Staff will be following up with participating organizations to identify collaborative opportunities and will work closely with faith-based groups providing meal services to connect their efforts with resources that assist individuals and families in exiting homelessness.

### ***Non-Profit Collaborative***

The City established a Non-Profit Collaborative to bring nonprofit organizations together to share knowledge, discuss concerns and ideas, and improve awareness of available community resources. The Collaborative is intended to strengthen coordination among service providers and enhance support for Riverside residents. Staff is currently conducting an inventory of nonprofit organizations and the services they provide to better understand resources availability and identify opportunities for improved collaboration.

## **DISCUSSION:**

In addition to the City's homeless-response programs, the RPD continues to carry out quality-of-life activities that address community concerns related to homelessness. These activities include increased patrols in high-impact areas, engagement with business owners and residents, enforcement of unlawful behavior such as trespassing and illegal camping, coordination with PSET and outreach teams during encampment resolutions, and rapid response to calls involving public safety, disorder, or individuals in crisis. The department also plays a key role in maintaining safety around critical infrastructure, parks, libraries, transit corridors, and commercial areas.

Most recent approaches included the following:

- *RPD overtime efforts.* Starting July 7, 2025, the RPD began deploying additional officers to proactively address livability issues along the Magnolia Corridor and within the Downtown Entertainment District. The Department now assigns six officers and one sergeant to this effort seven nights a week.
- *Redeploy Wildlands PSET to Urban.* Currently, one PSET team is dedicated to the city's wildland areas, and another team is dedicated to Caltrans areas. This team can be redeployed to the urban areas and address the wildland areas fewer days a week or as needed.
- *Narcotics team addresses areas impacted by drug use.* In April 2024, the RPD Narcotics Unit conducted an undercover drug buy operation along the Magnolia Corridor in response to complaints of increased drug activity. In three weeks, officers and detectives identified 44 suspects selling drugs in the area. The operation resulted in 104 arrests.

In November 2024, the RPD Narcotics Unit conducted another undercover buy operation along the Magnolia Corridor. Over a three-week period, 30 drug dealers were identified. The operation resulted in 93 arrests, four firearms recovered, and 1.2 pounds of methamphetamine seized.

The Narcotics Unit continues to actively address drug-related issues throughout the city.

### **Motels with Excessive Calls for Police Service**

Several of the motels along Magnolia Avenue in Ward 6 have also been the subject of excessive calls for police service. In total, between January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2024, RPD received a total of 3,105 calls for service. These calls for service typically include use of narcotics, overdoses, trespassing, refusing to leave, violent conduct, etc., and they often involve homeless individuals loitering at and around the motels.

To hold the motels financially responsible for the extraordinary police responses made to each motel, the City issued Extraordinary Police Response Bills ("EPRBs").

Starting in 2024, the City Attorney's Office began filing separate and concurrent actions against the five motels with the highest call for service numbers. Against each of the five motels, the City Attorney's Office filed (1) a judgment lien complaint to recoup the cost of extraordinary police responses, (if needed), and (2) a drug/nuisance abatement complaint to abate the constant narcotic and criminal activity occurring at the motels. The drug/nuisance abatement cases against each of the five motels are currently ongoing.

The following EPRSBs were issued.

<b>Motel</b>	<b>2023 Calendar Year (CY) EPRBs</b>	<b>2024 CY EPRBs</b>
American Inn	\$2,605.90 (Paid in full)	\$11,390.15 (Paid in full)
<b><i>Days Inn</i></b>	<b>\$25,014.70 (Paid \$200)</b>	<b>\$48,513.67 (Outstanding balance)</b>
<b><i>Econo Lodge</i></b>	<b>\$23,149.39 (Paid \$200)</b>	<b>\$9,394.03 (Outstanding</b>

		<b><i>balance)</i></b>
Garden Inn	\$532.01 (Paid in full)	\$1,171.81 (Paid in full)
<b><i>Motel 6</i></b>	<b><i>\$25,215.23 (Paid in full)</i></b>	<b><i>\$25,266.32 (Paid in full)</i></b>
<b><i>Palm Inn</i></b>	<b><i>\$12,198.34 (Paid in Full)</i></b>	<b><i>\$79,594.42 (Outstanding balance)</i></b>
<b><i>Riverside Inn</i></b>	<b><i>\$14,198.21 (Paid \$100)</i></b>	<b><i>\$50,541.31 (Outstanding balance)</i></b>
Sands Inn	\$3,302.76 (Paid in full)	\$17,781.48 (Paid \$1,500)
Simply Home	\$1,609.60 (Paid in full)	\$5,235.70 (Outstanding balance)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$107,826.14</b>	<b>\$248,888.89</b>

### ***Deploy Outreach Services Along the Magnolia Corridor***

Based on data from the Outreach ArcGIS maps, the highest concentration of encampments and homeless individual engaged by outreach teams are in Ward 5 through 7, particularly the areas surrounding Indiana Avenue/Van Buren Boulevard, Indiana Avenue/La Sierra Avenue, Magnolia Avenue/La Sierra Avenue, and Jackson Street/Magnolia Avenue. As a result, a multidisciplinary team consisting of homeless street outreach workers, substance-abuse counselors and peer support specialists will be focusing on their outreach and case management to build trust and assist with assessments, enrollment in services, housing referrals and crisis intervention.

### ***Mental Health Initiatives***

RUHS has implemented a comprehensive set of mental health initiatives aimed at addressing behavioral health needs, substance use disorders, and gaps in care for vulnerable populations. These initiatives focus on providing timely crisis intervention, expanding access to treatment and supportive services, and creating innovative housing and wellness programs. By integrating field-based response teams, legislative reforms, transitional housing, and multi-service behavioral health centers, these efforts seek to improve individual and community well-being, reduce reliance on incarceration and hospitalization, and promote long-term recovery and stability.

Below is a list of mental health initiatives currently in progress:

#### ***Mobile Crisis Response Team***

RUHS established a Mobile Crisis response Team, stood up a Mobile Crisis Response Team, a field-based crisis intervention unit composed of Clinical Therapists, Behavioral Health Specialists, and Peer Support Specialists. These teams work collaboratively with law enforcement, emergency department personnel, and community partners to divert individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis to the appropriate level of care.

Their involvement reduces the needs for inpatient hospitalization and decreases the amount of time law enforcement officers and emergency department staff spend responding to behavioral health-related incidents. The Mobile Crisis Response Teams serve individuals of all ages and backgrounds, providing timely, clinically informed support in the field.

#### ***Proposition 36 Substance Abuse and Crime Prevention Act of 2000***

California Proposition 36 is a voter-approved state initiative that changed how California handles certain non-violent drug offenses. It allows individuals convicted of non-violent drug possession offenses to receive community-based substance use treatment instead of incarceration. The goal is to reduce recidivism by providing treatment and support rather than jail time for those whose offenses are rooted in substance abuse.

The key issues with Proposition 36 include the following:

1. *Low Treatment Completion Rate*. One of the most significant challenges has been low rates of successful treatment completion. Many participants struggle with severe substance use disorders, co-occurring mental health conditions or unstable living situations, which can make it difficult to remain engaged in treatment programs.
2. *Insufficient Funding*. The measure authorized state funding to provide substance abuse treatment for eligible non-violent drug offenders. Initially counties received allocations to implement treatment programs in lieu of incarceration. However, in the years following implementation, state funding was drastically reduced due to budget constraints and shifting priorities. The lack of sustained funding has been cited as a major factor limiting the proposition's impact on reducing incarceration and promoting recovery, highlighting the need for ongoing investment in treatment-based alternatives to incarceration.
3. *Insufficient Supportive Services*. Proposition 36 originally focused heavily on treatment but did not adequately fund or require wraparound services such as mental health care, case management, stable housing, employment support, and transportation. Without this support, many participants were unable to sustain long-term recovery.
4. *Limited Consequences for Non-Compliance*. The proposition restricts courts from imposing jail time for the first or second probation violation, critics argue that participants may have limited accountability when they fail to attend treatment or violate program requirements. This can reduce engagement for some individuals with more complex needs.
5. *High-Risk Populations with Complex Needs*. Many participants have long histories of substance use, untreated trauma, mental illness, or repeated justice involvement. Traditional outpatient programs often cannot meet their needs without more intensive, integrated care.

Funding will be coming down soon from the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to all counties, but the allocation methodology has not yet been shared.

#### ***Senate Bill 43: Legal Changes to Involuntary Hold Criteria***

Signed in October 2023, Senate Bill 43 (SB 43), provides the most significant updates to California's Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act in 50 years. The LPS Act is a 1967 state law governing the involuntary detention, treatment, and conservatorship of people with behavioral health conditions. SB 43 expands access to care for people facing serious mental health or substance use challenges who are unable to seek help on their own. Counties had until January 1, 2026, to fully implement the program, which is when Riverside County plans to implement their program.

SB 43 expands the gravely disabled to include individuals who are:

1. Facing serious risks to their health or safety, such as repeated overdoses, severe withdrawal symptoms, such as repeated overdoses, severe withdrawal symptoms, or other medical emergencies.
2. Unable to access essential medical care, such as treatment for infections, chronic conditions, or critical medications.

3. Living with a significant mental health or substance use condition that interferes with their ability to meet their basic daily needs.

### ***The Place Transitional Housing Program***

On November 16, 2021, the City Council approved a Lease Agreement the County of Riverside to facilities a \$2,338,176 in building renovations for the operations of a 33-unit Transitional Housing Program. On April 15, 2025, the City Council approved a First Amendment to Lease Agreement with the County to increase the building renovations budget to \$5,053,151 and extend the lease term to a 30-year lease period with two additional five-year options to extend. The property is currently under rehabilitation and anticipated to be completed by April 2026.

### ***Emergency Treatment Services Relocation/Expansion***

RUHS-BH was awarded Proposition 1 funding in the amount of \$184 million to fund a new behavioral wellness center in Moreno Valley. At the heart of that project, a 100-bed inpatient psychiatric facility will serve adults, adolescents and children between the ages of 12 and under. The project must be developed by 2029.

### ***Wellness Village***

The Wellness Village, being developed by RUHS-BH in Mead Valley, will offer outpatient and residential services for mental health and substance use disorders, primary healthcare, and behavioral health urgent care. The facility will serve children, youth, families, veterans, and others, and will be home to the first behavioral health urgent care center for children in Riverside County.

The Wellness Village is introducing an innovative perspective on well-being. With a focus on family housing and a comprehensive approach to care, it's not just a healthcare facility; but a community hub committed to nurturing holistic health and fostering meaningful connections. This is particularly true for children under 13, as Wellness Village will be the only provider in the county offering family housing for children in treatment. The project will be completed in 2026.

### ***Continuum of Care (COC) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)***

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development released the 2025 COC NOFO on November 13, 2025. The County of Riverside manages the Riverside City and County CoC.

This NOFO represents a significant shift in how homelessness funding is allocated, introducing increased competition among approximately 450 CoCs nationwide. Under the new guidelines, no more than 30% of a CoC's Annual Renewal Demand may be allocated to Permanent Housing programs, including Permanent Housing—Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Permanent Housing—Rapid Re-Housing (RRH), and Joint Transitional Housing—Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH) projects.

The Riverside CoC currently supports 640 households, 887 individuals including many veterans and families with children. Due to the new funding limitations, project-based PSH units will need to be developed to ensure the continued availability of long-term permanent supportive housing with case management.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Michelle Davis, Housing and Human Services Director  
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Attachments:

1. Homelessness Action Plan
2. MOU with Riverside County for a Coordinate Response to Homelessness
3. Senate Bill 43 Facts Summary Sheet
4. Presentation