

## Questions & Answers from the 2023-2027 Consolidated Plan Community Meetings

### *Virtual Meeting: February 13, 2023*

**Question/Comment:** The biggest issue we have here in South LA is homelessness, just like everywhere else in LA. How do we measure what is being allocated where? Are there any measurements towards these goals? Like for affordable housing, what is affordable housing in LA: who can afford \$2,000 for rent? How do we keep track where these funds are going? Where can we find the numbers?

**Response:** It is incredibly difficult to track so many different funding sources that contribute to lots of related initiatives. The Los Angeles Housing Department does have a [tracker online](#) on their use of HHH funds. We are also required to report to HUD annually on planned use of these funds and our outcomes. You can find these reports on [our website](#).

**Question/Comment:** Would like to see more beautification projects.

**Response:** Great idea. CDBG can be used for this purpose and to reduce blight in certain areas.

**Question/Comment:** I live in Highland Park and work in El Sereno. There has been a shift in housing instability for some. Are there certain areas where housing instability is becoming more of an issue?

**Response:** The information that we shared on average median income could be overlaid with housing cost data to show cost burden. We will be looking at housing affordability and cost burden data when drafting the Con Plan. The maps we have shared were pulled from [PolicyMap](#), which is a publicly available data mapping site if you'd like to explore things more closely in your neighborhood.

**Question/Comment:** What do you mean about areas that should be prioritized for investment, does this mean housing? Or is it broader like recreation, services for low-income families? Most low-income families work 1-2 jobs a day. Do these funds cover childcare or afterschool programs since this is a necessity for lots of families to enable parents to go to work?

**Response:** We are talking about neighborhoods when we say "area", but we also want to hear about your funding priorities more broadly. Childcare facilities are eligible for CDBG funding.

**Question/Comment:** Parking is an issue for people in dense neighborhoods who can't park near their homes because so many people live in each unit. And there are also people living in their cars. People end up having to walk 4 blocks on the street and there are also homeless encampments on the sidewalk.

**Response:** It's a very complicated and layered issue. For example, new developments near transit stops can provide less parking spaces to build more units, but there is a tradeoff for the neighborhoods that already have parking problems. We also want to address the needs of the people that are forced to live in their cars and in encampments which speaks to the Mayor's declaration to get people inside. These are the connections between issues we need to be hearing about.

**Question/Comment:** Would like to see more year-round shelters. People need help year-round to get into stable housing. There doesn't seem to be much support for families with children. I know a woman who spent her nights riding the bus because her son was 13 and they were not allowed at a woman's shelter together.

**Response:** Thank you for this comment. We will share these concerns with our team and the Mayor's office. Another example of an intersecting issue and speaks to the Mayor's declaration to get our unhoused neighbors into housing. You can also continue to share additional concerns in the chat and via email to [CIFD.planning@lacity.org](mailto:CIFD.planning@lacity.org).

**Question/Comment:** Have you engaged with an organization called Chrysalis? I worked with them for 10 years in downtown and the San Fernando Valley. Not everyone needs wraparound services, some people just have tough times, and we need to understand their specific set of need.

**Response:** We haven't yet but we are going to have more opportunities for engagement with stakeholders in the future. Please send any emails we should contact to [CIFD.planning@lacity.org](mailto:CIFD.planning@lacity.org).

### ***Virtual Meeting February 15, 2023***

**Question/Comment:** I work for a community-based organization that works with older adults and seniors and worked with the City to develop the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Accelerator program which houses extremely low-income seniors for 5 years. These seniors do not have a Section 8 voucher. We are tasked with trying to transition them to permanent affordable housing. How are we going to develop more housing if there's no affordable housing to place them into and there is not any more land to develop housing? When the voucher waiting list was recently opened there was a huge demand that was much higher than the available vouchers. I think we need to think outside the box in housing (i.e., the ADU program) provide incentives to those who build ADUs who rent to older adults and others at risk.

**Response:** Thank you for highlighting that there's still an extreme demand for affordable housing. ADUs are a newer strategy to try. It's been in the news a lot lately and it's one strategy to increase units in a place like LA that has lots of single-family neighborhoods.

**Question/Comment:** I work for a homeless service organization. Even if people have vouchers, they can't use them because the rent is too expensive, and they can't find a unit in time. They face barriers like low credit scores or have evictions on their records. Emergency vouchers only provide time-limited subsidy and then people need to pay for housing on their own. Lots of voucher funding doesn't end up being used. Wages are too low to sustain any rent in Los Angeles, not with one job.

**Response:** Great points. We've learned some lessons from the emergency vouchers that provide incentives for landlord to accept the vouchers and something we can look into expanding.

**Question/Comment:** Agree with lots of comments about develop more affordable housing, but we also need to stabilize and revitalize neighborhoods. We are not supporting the infrastructure in these communities, just increasing the number of people in these neighborhoods and sometimes creating overcrowding conditions.

**Response:** We keep hearing about how issues are interconnected. Many issues are dependent on each other. Increasing the density in the City would increase the need for additional or strengthened infrastructure and should also go hand in hand with additional housing development. We've also heard more about overcrowding in the City and how this issue impacts public health outcomes (like higher COVID-19 rates during the pandemic).

**Question/Comment:** More funding for small business development in inner-city neighborhoods.

**Response:** Definitely an eligible use of CDBG funds. Small entrepreneurs in different parts of the City are eligible for existing programs and this is definitely a continued need.

**Question/Comment:** Spend more on shared or group housing, stop building \$400-600,000 units that take years to develop.

**Response:** Definitely another concern in the City, the high cost of construction. Lots of news items on the cost of developing affordable housing and related to the Mayor's declaration of emergency on homelessness. Are there ways the City could streamline processes or lower costs?

**Question/Comment:** Sadly, the average cost of living in LA for a family of four is \$4,050 without rent. Are there going to be wrap around services so those can remain housed? This is important.

**Response:** LA is a very expensive City to live in and this concern speaks to the Mayor's declaration of emergency on homelessness which is directing City departments to look at ways in how they can support and align with each other's work, but also providing services so that once unhoused persons are getting off the street are also staying stably housed so that they don't return to homelessness. The City is looking to provide services in any housing it is producing in response to the Mayor's declaration. Understood that this is a critical need.

**Question/Comment:** Coordination with the County is critical to addressing the homelessness issue especially the Department of Mental Health.

**Response:** The City and the County have both issued declarations of emergency on homelessness and are both looking to create stronger connections to the Department of Mental Health. Helps that LAHSA is also doing a lot of this regional work on homelessness and coordinating these relationships.

**Question/Comment:** City could offer incentives to develop ADUs and rent to vulnerable populations like seniors, could be more than they payment standards for Section 8. Landlords know that the market values are often higher than Section 8 payment standards, could we provide more than they would be getting on the private market? Wraparound services would also help the optics of attracting landlords. Helping the public understand who are these subsidized residents and what is the City doing to increase their stability?

**Response:** Great points. Not just offering incentives on the construction of ADUs, but also provide incentives to rent to certain priority populations. Programs like the Emergency Voucher Program did allow for incentives for landlord to participate in the program. Unlikely that we would be able to provide payment standards that are higher than the private market because we would still need to comply with HUD regulations. But we should be asking ourselves what would both keep existing affordable housing landlords and attract new ones. We could do more of a public relations campaign with landlords about who these residents are to increase both landlord and public acceptance of hosting subsidized units in their communities.

**Question/Comment:** Jobs are a vital component in all of this. One of the biggest barriers to getting and retaining a job is the lack of affordable childcare, for children of all ages. Even if the children are of school age, the parents' work hours are often longer than the school day and of course the kids have vacations during the year.

**Response:** Childcare was a huge issue during COVID. Parents really struggled to care for their children while they were also expected to work full days. Parents must find a safe place for their children so that they can maintain stable employment. Childcare is an eligible use of CDBG funds. Thanks for that point.

**Question/Comment:** Do landlords receive any tax rebates or credits for building and renting ADUs?

**Response:** Not sure. We will need to research that.