

<LETTERHEAD>

August 4, 2023

Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council  
c/o City Clerk  
Room 395, City Hall

**Re: Housing and Homelessness Emergency Action Plan**

Los Angeles' Administrative Code provides that the Mayor has the authority to declare the existence of a local emergency as a result of any occurrence which, by reason of its magnitude, is or is likely to overwhelm the normal operations of City government. For several years, the humanitarian crisis of homelessness has clearly required a City response that goes beyond business as usual, and so Mayor Bass' first action upon taking office -- on December 12, 2022, the first day of her Administration -- was to come together with City Departments and Members of City Council declare a State of Emergency to confront Los Angeles' housing and homelessness crisis. The City Council ratified the Mayor's declaration on December 13, 2022.

**The Updated Emergency Declaration**

This action plan addresses the response to the updated emergency declaration required pursuant to LAMC Section 8.33. The Office of the Mayor will prepare an update every 90 days to inform the decision to continue or terminate the emergency declaration.

The Mayor is authorized to declare a Section 8.33 emergency on housing and homelessness if any one of three criteria are present:

1. Housing supply is projected to be at least 40 percent below the annual housing production goals as established in the City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA);
2. There exists more than twice the number of unhoused people in the City of LA than the number of interim beds; or
3. A citywide increase in unhoused individuals by more than 20% in a single year as reported in the annual point in time count (PIT).

The first and second criteria currently exist and thus support the Mayor's declaration of the emergency. According to the Planning Department, the City is 60.3% below the annual production goal for the current eight-year RHNA cycle of 2021-2029. LAHSA reports that 16,521 interim beds exist between their stock and new efforts to increase

interim housing from the City, while the recently released PIT count indicated that there are 46,260 unhoused individuals in the City, well more than twice the number of interim beds.

The Emergency Declaration will allow the City to continue to respond aggressively to the crisis, including expediting contracting and streamlining processing of affordable housing and permanent supportive housing projects. Increasing the supply of both permanent and long term interim housing units will count towards satisfying the LA Alliance lawsuit. Importantly, it sends a clear signal that the City is committed to an aggressive and proactive plan to address unsheltered homelessness.

### **A Framework for Addressing the Housing and Homelessness Crisis**

The Mayor's Office will continue to build on the years of committed work City Councilmembers have done to address homelessness in their districts and looks forward to continuing to integrate our work on this crisis. The framework of this Action Plan is centered on moving unsheltered individuals from encampments to interim housing to permanent, stable and affordable housing.

To that end, the Action Plan is organized around three broad objectives:

1. Resolve encampments by housing people in interim, then stable permanent housing
2. Expedite affordable housing development
3. Prevent Angelenos from falling into homelessness

The objectives are realized by programs and policies driven by core principles:

- This is a coordinated citywide approach in partnership with the City Council;
- This is a unified approach across all levels of government, from federal, to state, to county and local;
- Our work is built on lessons learned from the first 7 months of action under the original Emergency Declaration (December 2022 - June 2023) and we will continue to evolve, developing new programs and partnerships based on what we learn;
- We must cut red tape, eliminate barriers, streamline and expedite processes and refrain from creating new bureaucracies as we lift up programs;
- We must innovate in using our existing resources and seek new resources and opportunities;
- We must do better to collect and report data, and importantly track and report outcomes.

## **OBJECTIVE 1: Resolve Encampments by Housing People**

The programs and processes for sustainable encampment resolution are detailed below. This section is divided into three programmatic areas:

1. Bring people inside
2. Expand the infrastructure of stable, permanent interim housing options
3. Remove barriers and streamline access to housing

### **(1) Bring People Inside**

***Inside Safe (IS):*** As of August 4, 2023, Inside Safe has held 23 operations with 8 nonprofit service providers across 13 Council Districts bringing more than 1400 people inside. During this pilot phase, we have established an infrastructure/workflow across our stakeholders – Mayor’s Office, City Council, City departments, LAHSA, Service Providers, and County agencies.

The IS Field Intervention Team started in July and serves as the City’s internal outreach/engagement team throughout all phases of Inside Safe. This will include:

- Encampment assessment
- Transition to interim housing
- Coordination of service connection
- Quality control across program and data collection

The City Council has been a critical partner in launching Inside Safe and providing funding for this citywide effort.

Los Angeles County is responsible for providing homeless health-related services for the City of Los Angeles. For Inside Safe participants, the Mayor’s Office will continue to collaborate with County Supervisors and the County’s Chief Executive Office - Homeless Initiative to connect our participants with a number of County agencies and departments including:

- Department of Health Services Multidisciplinary Teams and Department of Mental Health Homeless & Mobile Engagement Teams who partner with us on Inside Safe operations
- Department of Health Services Mobile Clinic System provides comprehensive primary, urgent and women’s healthcare;
- Department of Mental Health provides support, and treatment to individuals with severe and persistent mental illness who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness and exhibiting signs of severe impairment;

- Department of Public Social Services provides eligibility determination and enrollment in various programs and services (e.g., Medi-Cal, In-Home supportive services, CalFresh, CalWORKS, General Relief, etc) designed to assist families and individuals who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless;
- Department of Public Health Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (DPH-SAPC) refers participants to the Client Engagement and Navigation Services (CENS) program to address substance use and addiction.

***Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Pilot Program:*** As a part of the Mayor’s comprehensive commitment to bringing unhoused Angelenos inside, on July 31, 2023, the Mayor’s Office transmitted to Council our proposed pilot program to supplement the extension of substance use and mental health treatment for interim housing residents citywide. The program will use the \$7,825,658 from the FY 22-23 Opioid and Tobacco Settlement funds to reimburse providers for additional time and services not covered by existing state and federal funding. The City will work with Council offices, 16 service providers, 5 treatment centers, LAHSA, and LA County Department of Public Health Substance Use Prevention and Control to collect and analyze data to evaluate this pilot program’s referral process as well as impacts on people with substance use disorder who are willing/ready to pursue inpatient treatment.

***Encampment Resolution Grant:*** In June 2023 the County’s Housing for Health team, in partnership with the City of Los Angeles, was awarded a \$60M Encampment Resolution Grant (ERG). The ERG will serve 3,000 unsheltered individuals from Los Angeles’ Skid Row neighborhood within 3 years. The grant funds will enhance existing outreach teams to engage encampment residents; create a Safe Landings space that provides 24/7 health and behavioral health services with triage beds; enhance existing and create new interim housing sites; connect participants to intensive case management services including housing navigation; and facilitate permanent housing placements with the appropriate level of services.

***RV Task Force:*** In 2022, RVs were 15.4% of the total homeless count or 22.8% of unsheltered count. An estimated 6,484 people were living in 3,964 RVs in the City of Los Angeles. Since May 2022, the CAO’s outreach team has led and/or helped to coordinate more than 20 large-scale RV outreach operations in eight separate Council Districts. At least two additional Council offices opted to address RVs in their districts on their own. Based on these experiences, the CAO worked with all relevant City departments, including and especially LADOT, LASAN, and LAPD, along with the City Attorney’s office and LAHSA, to develop protocols for streamlining the process for identifying and addressing RVs in the City.

The Mayor's Office will convene a task force with City Council and appropriate departments including LADOT, LASAN, the City Attorney, BOE and CAO to develop a comprehensive citywide strategy based on the work done to date. This strategy will include a budget, sites that can be used for storage and parking, and next steps to take action. The Mayor's Office has already begun reviewing City land that could be used for this endeavor.

## **(2) Expand the infrastructure of permanent interim housing options**

Interim housing is a vital step in the journey to permanent housing and the City currently lacks a stable supply of beds. With our FY23/24 budget, the Mayor's Office is moving to lower the cost of interim housing for Inside Safe as well as establish a permanent citywide infrastructure of interim housing. Currently, federal investment focuses on financing permanent housing and leaves a gap in support for interim housing - we plan to bridge that through these efforts.

***Long Term Leasing or Occupancy Agreements:*** The Mayor's Office is working to shift nightly hotel bookings to longer term occupancy agreements. These agreements will target 100% occupancy of Inside Safe participants, which can better facilitate service provision and safety while ensuring a steady stock of housing units for ongoing encampment resolution. We will target motels in the areas with the greatest need for interim housing resources.

***Expand the City's Permanent Supply of Interim Housing:*** Our system lacks a stable supply of interim housing. The FY23/24 Inside Safe Budget has \$47M identified, which along with other sources, will be used for interim housing acquisitions. The Mayor is committed to exploring every opportunity to expand interim housing through collaboration with council office investments, state partnerships (including the 500 units of temporary shelter pledged by Governor Newsom), and philanthropic efforts.

## **(3) Removing Barriers and streamlining access to housing**

The Mayor's Office will employ strategies to remove barriers in the pipeline to permanent housing and speed the matching of interim housing participants with available units.

***Federal Efforts:*** Los Angeles was selected to be part of the Biden administration's ALL INside initiative that partners with state and local governments to strengthen and accelerate local efforts to help people move off the streets. It is our hope that this partnership will help expedite our efforts to address United States Department of

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines that are barriers to permanent housing. This includes “presumptive eligibility” for voucher holders, which would allow housing navigators to more quickly move people into permanent housing while completing the necessary documentation and paperwork afterward.

The Mayor’s Office will continue working with HACLA, the City Council, and the County to push for waivers from HUD that will cut red tape and get people housed more quickly.

***Encourage landlords to accept Housing Choice Vouchers:*** The Mayor has called on all Los Angeles property owners to accept Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) and expand our available permanent housing stock. The Mayor’s Office will work with HACLA to launch a series of networking events across the City to engage with and educate property owners about the HCV program. In addition, the Mayor’s Office will seek feedback from property owners and review best practices to identify process improvements that can make participation in the HCV programs smooth and efficient.

## **OBJECTIVE 2: Expedite Affordable Housing Development**

It is imperative that we build more affordable housing, at a lower cost, and a greater speed. To address this, the Mayor’s Office will:

1. Accelerate housing approvals and expand production
2. Expand financing options to bring more affordability and preserve the housing stock
3. Embrace innovations in construction

### **1. Accelerate Housing Approvals and Expanding Production**

***Executive Directive 1 (ED1):*** The Department of City Planning is expected to release the draft ordinance creating a permanent program based on ED1 in late August. The draft ordinance adoption process will include public hearings, review by the City Planning Commission, and final consideration by the City Council and Mayor. ED1, and the subsequent permanent program, will continue to expedite and streamline the development of 100% affordable housing citywide. Thus far, ED 1 has accelerated 31 projects, totaling 2,342 units of affordable housing. There are an additional 56 projects currently under review.

***Executive Directive 3 (ED3):*** ED3 was signed to maximize the use of city-owned property for temporary and permanent housing. In August 2023 the Mayor’s Office is convening 3 interdepartmental working groups that will both develop ongoing processes

to identify lands suitable for housing development and also streamline and make consistent the City's approach to soliciting and selecting teams to develop on its lands. The Mayor's Office will continue to support innovations around the use and development of City-owned land. Thus far, the Mayor's Office has reviewed more than 3,300 parcels of publicly owned land and worked with City Council colleagues to identify potential sites for future development.

**Metro's 10K Plan:** LA Metro has released a plan to build 10,000 units of housing on Metro owned land. Of the 17 sites Metro has identified thus far for this effort, 12 sites are within the City of Los Angeles. As chair of the Metro board, Mayor Bass will work to ensure that affordability is maximized in the development of the 10,000 units. In addition, the Mayor's office will proactively coordinate with Metro to manage the pipeline of units on each of the 12 sites to expedite permitting and approvals and support the necessary financing.

## **2. Expand financing options to bring more affordability and preserve the housing stock**

Affordable housing financing has become increasingly complex and cumbersome for developers, exacerbating costs and timelines. Furthermore, there is not adequate financing available to meet our housing development needs. Additionally, with the very public collapse of the over 2,000 units operated by the Skid Row Housing Trust, it has become glaringly clear that our older stock of permanent supportive housing is at risk of failing. All these factors drive our plan to expand the options for innovative and flexible financing solutions focused on reducing the cost of housing and creating more opportunities for affordability.

**Innovative Financing Solutions:** The Mayor's Office is bringing on a consultant to explore innovations in financing for affordable housing. There will be 3 targeted outcomes:

- *Create a fund that will allow banks or CDFIs to underwrite the rent levels of tenant based vouchers, likely in the form of a guarantee program.*
- *Create a Fund to increase affordability in market rate or mixed income projects that are entitled but have not started construction.*
- *Develop a systematic approach to assessing financing options, structured around a cost benefit analysis.*

**Joint Powers Authority:** At the request of the Mayor's Office, the CAO is assessing the potential for the city to join existing Joint Powers Authorities (JPA) which will create

a new tax exempt bond financing option for developers that provide mixed income and 100% affordable housing in the City. If determined to be a beneficial option, the proposal will be brought to City Council for review and approval.

***United to House LA (ULA):*** Under the direction of the Mayor's Office, LAHD is creating a plan to use ULA funding to improve affordable housing financing, rehabilitate existing affordable housing, and support expanded ADU programs and home ownership. If the City wins the pending litigation over ULA, this plan will be ready for immediate execution.

***Project Based Vouchers (PBV):*** According to LAHD staff, there are approximately 25 projects in the City's affordable and supportive housing pipelines that are in need of project based vouchers, with 809 units. Over the next several years HACLA is targeting redevelopment of its public housing properties and will require approximately 1,000 project based vouchers to augment operating expenses. PBVs are highly constrained, and shortages continue to impact the City's pipeline. The Mayor's Office will advocate for more PBV allocation and explore other pathways to address the capital needs of these projects.

### **3. Innovations in Construction**

The Mayor's office will facilitate the greater use and adoption of innovative construction techniques by reviewing our permitting systems as they apply to innovative construction types like modular and offsite manufactured housing and adopting new streamlined approaches. The Mayor's office is partnering to secure grant funding for this initiative which could launch in early 2024, or sooner if feasible.

### **OBJECTIVE 3: Preventing Homelessness**

Since the COVID eviction moratorium was lifted on February 1, 2023, LAHD has received approximately 1,800 3-day notices to quit per week. Previous protection laws gave tenants until August 1, 2023 to pay any missing rent due from March 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021. With the August 1st deadline passing, we expect a spike in notices to quit and unlawful detainers.

***Public Information Campaign:*** The Mayor's Office and the Los Angeles Housing Department launched a public information campaign to get the word out about new protections and resources for Angelenos. This campaign is targeted to high-risk zip codes, in multiple languages, with ads run on a variety of social media platforms and even taco trucks.



***Proactive Outreach:*** The Mayor’s office will be collaborating with outside organizations to do outreach to educate tenants on their rights and how to seek legal assistance if they receive notice of eviction. These community-wide efforts will help at-risk Angelenos stay housed.

***ULA Tenant Protection Programs:*** The Mayor’s Office proposes using over \$80M in FY23/24 Measure ULA dollars to fund rental assistance programs. These proposed expenditures include:

- Short Term Emergency Assistance Program that will allow eligible low-income tenant households to apply for up to six months owed back rent due to a one time economic hardship.
- Eviction Defense/Prevention to continue and expand the Stay Housed LA (SHLA) program that provides households at risk of eviction with legal support, “know your rights” education, and, in limited cases, rental assistance through settlements with their landlords.
- Tenant Outreach and Education campaign to provide broad and targeted tenant education outreach services, including workshops, legal clinics, paid and earned media, and targeted social media.
- Additional infrastructure, technology, and community outreach, to educate tenants and landlords about their rights and obligations, and to enforce the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance (TAHO) (effective August 6, 2021) to protect tenants from harassment by landlords.

The Mayor’s Office is committed to addressing the housing and homelessness crisis with the urgency it requires and looks forward to the day when our residents all have a safe place to call home.

Sincerely,

KAREN BASS  
Mayor