

METRO'S HOMELESS PROGRAM: GAP ANALYSIS

| No. | Gap Identified | Recommendation | Opportunities & Justification | Anticipated Outcome | Metro Response |
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| 1 | <p>There is insufficient internal integration and coordination among Metro departments, which can lead to duplication of efforts, confusion about program goals and diminished impact of Metro's efforts.</p> | <p>The Homeless Outreach, Management and Engagement (HOME) Unit should Provide Oversight, Integration, and Regional Coordination of Metro's Homeless Initiatives</p> | <p><i>Metro should identify a unit to oversee and coordinate homeless related efforts with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new Homeless Outreach, Management and Engagement (HOME) unit will be the agency's lead for both internal and regional collaboration on all issues related to homelessness, including outreach, managing data collection and community partnerships. - The HOME unit should be tasked with implementing a workplan to advance the recommendations in this gap analysis. Metro should consider formally announcing the new Homeless Outreach, Management and Engagement (HOME) unit both internally and to the public once a clear vision and roles are defined. - The HOME unit should facilitate internal coordination across Metro departments to facilitate problem-solving, buy-in across departments, and rapid deployment of resources. | <p><i>Metro will better coordinate efforts to address Homelessness, leading to efficiencies, better communication, and an enhanced ability to manage and track efforts.</i></p> | <p>Metro has increased the staffing in the FY23 budget to oversee and coordinate homeless related efforts. The new HOME unit will consist of 4 positions and lead the agency's internal and regional collaboration on all issues related to homelessness, including outreach, managing data collection and community partnerships. The HOME unit will facilitate internal coordination across Metro departments to facilitate problem-solving, buy-in across departments, and</p> |

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| | | | | | rapid deployment of resources. |
| 2 | Metro currently does not have clear agency-wide goals to address homelessness on the system, which makes it more difficult to coalesce and implement a cohesive and comprehensive strategy. | Create Clear Agency-Wide Goals to Address Homelessness on Metro | <p><i>Metro should commence a strategic planning process to establish Homeless Strategy Goals.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing goals should be a part of the strategic planning process, led by the newly established Homeless Outreach, Management and Engagement (HOME) unit and guide the development of an annual workplan and funding priorities. - Investments, data tracking, and strategic decisions should be aligned with set goals. | <i>Metro will be able to develop an updated Homeless Program that advances clear priorities and be able to communicate the agency's goals internally and externally.</i> | The HOME unit will work with internal and external stakeholders to identify clear goals for addressing homelessness on Metro over the next 6 months. Having clear, definable goals will ensure everyone is working toward |

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| | | | | | the same objective. |
| 3 | There is a lack of consistent training across various levels of Metro staff and contractors in understanding the agency's approach to homelessness. | Develop Cross-Departmental Training that Humanizes Homelessness and Facilitates Organizational Buy-In | <i>To better strengthen Metro's capacity to address homelessness on transit, Metro will need to develop cross-departmental training on homelessness for employees, especially frontline employees who have direct public interactions.</i> - | This would give front line staff the training needed when interacting with individuals experiencing homelessness. It would also provide much-needed context and sensitivity training for policymakers within Metro's organization to be more responsive and aware of the | Training curriculum for all frontline employees is currently being created in partnership with the Department of Mental Health and UCLA. Metro expects this hybrid training to roll-out across the agency in January 2023. |

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| | | | | homelessness crisis. | |
| 4 | <p>Currently, Metro utilizes transit operations dollars to fund programs to address homelessness on the system. There is also a lack of funding opportunities available to support Metro's homelessness investments long-term. However, the amount of available funding regionally is</p> | <p>Identify and Advocate for Additional Funding to Address Homelessness in Transit Environments</p> | <p><i>Metro should seek to leverage and coordinate with providers working across the region to leverage available funding and better address homelessness, specifically in transit environments.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently, there are no federal, state, regional, private, and philanthropic funding specifically to support Transit Agencies who are impacted by individuals seeking shelter on transit systems. - Metro should advocate at the local, State, and national level for additional funding for the region that can be used to target specific interventions associated with the transit system. - Metro should participate in or establish consistent opportunities to convene with other regional stakeholders to discuss funding needs, strategies, and | <p><i>Metro will be able to leverage or secure additional non-Metro operations funding to serve unhoused individuals on the transit system.</i></p> | <p>LAHSA recently invited Metro to participate in their monthly Executive Directors' meeting where the County, the City and more than 90 homeless services providers meet to discuss opportunities for collaboration around funding and service provision. It is imperative that Metro integrate into the</p> |

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| | insufficient to address the homelessness crisis. Annually, Metro is spending over \$5 million in transit operations funds to support homeless outreach. | | partnerships that would benefit the unhoused on the Metro system. | | continuum of care to successfully connect with funding opportunities at the local, state, and federal level. Metro must increase coordination with funding partners and service providers beyond those that Metro directly offers. |
| 5 | There is a lack of longitudinal data on the number of homeless individuals on Metro due to unreliable methodology and a limited historic partnership with LAHSA. | Conduct Annual Homeless Counts (Point in Time Count) to Establish Baseline and Track Trends | <p><i>LAHSA should collaborate with Metro to incorporate Metro property and facilities into the annual Point in Time Count.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Metro should refine its current methodology for counting to conduct regular longitudinal homeless counts (Point in Time Count) on an annual basis in coordination with LAHSA's annual Homeless Count. - This data should supplant but not supersede the data and information collected from outreach teams who are monitoring trends daily. | With baseline figures and regular counts, Metro can quantify, and track progress and trends related to the number of unhoused individuals on the system. | LAHSA has reached out to coordinate Metro's inclusion in the upcoming annual Point in Time Count. |

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| 6 | Improvements are needed to facilitate consistent, accurate, and uniform data collection, management, and analysis across Metro's homeless programs. | Improve Data Collection, Management, and Analysis | <p><i>Metro should improve its data collection, management, and analysis across its various homeless programs and outreach partners.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Metro's data strategy should align with Metro's agency-wide goals. - Metro should ensure, to the extent feasible, that datapoints are uniform across programs. | <p><i>Improvements to data management and analysis can help assess and guide improvements to Metro's response. Metro will use data to better inform policy and financial decision making.</i></p> | Metro will work with our homeless services partners and LAHSA to identify best practices around data collection and create a reporting dashboard to facilitate data sharing with service providers, cities, the County, and LAHSA. |
| 7 | The current number of outreach teams (8) does not provide the necessary coverage across Metro's full transit system. | Increase the Number of Multidisciplinary Homeless Outreach Teams to Expand Reach and Access | <p><i>Metro's current outreach model is effective and should be expanded.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Given the significant need for outreach services across the entire system, Metro should increase the number of multidisciplinary outreach teams by contracting with the service providers who are leading efforts in the respective service planning areas of LA County through the master agreement with the Department of Health Services' Housing for Health Program. - The number of multidisciplinary homeless outreach teams should be regularly reassessed based on outcomes of the | <p><i>Creating connections with unhoused individuals on the system and facilitating placements into interim and permanent housing will reduce the number of individuals seeking shelter on the system.</i></p> | Metro is doubling of outreach teams by increasing the homeless outreach teams to 16. In partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services', Housing for Health Program, Metro is pursuing partnerships with |

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| | | | <p>team, data from the Point in Time Counts, and feedback from homeless outreach providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data should be tracked to determine whether the rates of placements by the Metro outreach teams are consistent with other outreach teams serving the respective service planning areas. | | <p>the non-profits working in Service Planning Areas (SPA) across the County to provide dedicated outreach services on Metro in their respective areas. These lead outreach providers have more connections, relationships, and knowledge within their respective SPAs which will facilitate them connecting unhoused riders with services and housing. By December 2022, Metro will deploy teams from lead outreach providers in SPAs the San Fernando Valley (SPA 2), the San Gabriel</p> |

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| | | | | | <p>Valley (SPA 3), the Metro area (SPA 4), and the East area (SPA 7). PATH and LA Mission will continue to be the primary outreach provider in the West area (SPA 5) and the South area (SPA 6) due to capacity issues with the lead providers. Staff will pursue a separate agreement with the lead provider in Long Beach (SPA 8) because the Housing for Health Program does not include this area of the County.</p> |

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| 8 | <p>Many of the individuals that are being outreached to by the Metro outreach teams are interested in services, but based on the lack of available units in the region, it is difficult to place individuals in long-term affordable and/or supportive housing</p> | <p>Increase the Number of Housing Navigators Serving Metro-Dedicated Outreach Teams</p> | <p><i>Metro can identify resources to hire dedicated Housing Navigators that can focus on identifying long-term housing opportunities for the clients engaged by Metro's homeless outreach teams.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is currently a significant supply of Emergency Housing Vouchers made available by the Federal Government, which require an extensive vetting process to determine eligibility. - Furthermore, there is an insufficient supply of vacant units that are willing to accept the voucher payment standard. | <p><i>Additional, dedicated housing navigators could assist in matching individuals on the Metro system to long term housing, reducing the number of individuals seeking shelter on the system.</i></p> | <p>Metro is in discussion with our current homeless services providers to determine the appropriate number of housing navigators for each provider.</p> |
| 9 | <p>Metro currently has three partnerships with law enforcement entities who have had unclear roles related to homeless outreach.</p> | <p>Better Define Roles for Law Enforcement</p> | <p><i>Trained teams led by law enforcement, which include mental health and social service experts, such as LAPD's Homeless Outreach and Proactive engagement (HOPE), the LASD's Mental Health Evaluation Team (MET) teams, and LBPD's Quality of Life Program (QOL), should be strategically deployed to assist unhoused individuals in distress that require specialized care and attention (including assessment for a medical hold), which should be decoupled from the services of Metro's outreach teams. A new protocol and workflow should be established to ensure proper oversight over the law enforcement teams.</i></p> | <p><i>Law enforcement resources will be better utilized by focusing on public safety concerns, and unhoused people on the system will likely be better served by trauma-</i></p> | <p>Metro's new HOME unit will prioritize creating new protocols governing the use and deployment of law enforcement's homeless response teams.</p> |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unhoused people often have negative histories engaging with law enforcement, law enforcement cannot access HMIS, and law enforcement agencies often have divergent approaches to problem-solving. - Metro should follow best practices that highlight the benefits of de-coupling homeless outreach from law enforcement. - Metro should focus deployment of these specialized teams when there is a threat to public safety, or the unhoused individuals require specialized care that can be provided through the HOPE, MET and QOL teams. | <i>informed multidisciplinary teams with specialized training on outreach.</i> | |
| 10 | There are visibility concerns among staff and riders regarding dedicated homeless outreach teams. | Integrate Transit Ambassador Program with Homeless Response | <p><i>Transit Ambassadors should be trained to provide customer information and initiate contact with unhoused riders as they may be the first point of contact for the unhoused.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . - The Ambassadors should be trained to help unhoused riders connect with the outreach teams. - If possible, Ambassadors should seek to recruit among individuals who previously experienced homelessness. | <p><i>Transit Ambassadors will be embedded liaisons across the system helping to connect unhoused with individuals, improving the ability of the outreach teams to make connections</i></p> | The transit ambassador training curriculum includes a specific module on interaction with individuals experiencing homelessness. Metro is encouraging our contractors to hire ambassadors who are from the neighborhoods |

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| | | | | <p><i>with those in need.</i></p> <p><i>This could also create employment opportunities for individuals who have experienced homelessness.</i></p> | <p>surrounding our system, including individuals with unique lived experiences.</p> |
| 11 | <p>Homeless outreach providers have indicated a need for a central location to connect with clients.</p> | <p>Pilot a Hub of Services/Navigation Center</p> | <p><i>Metro should establish a designated "Hub of Services" or "Navigation Center" where Metro riders can go to access services.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Metro should pilot a Hub of Services/Navigation Center (Hub), building off feedback from service providers and successful models utilized by other transit agencies (e.g., SEPTA's <i>Hub of Hope</i>). - The model could include showers, places to temporarily sleep, food and support services. - Metro should explore partnerships with the County of Los Angeles and LAHSA (social service agencies) to fund and operate the Hub. - The Hub should be located in a place that is accessible for people experiencing homelessness. | <p><i>Creating additional opportunities for connection with unhoused individuals on the system and facilitating placements into interim and permanent housing will reduce the number of individuals seeking shelter on the system.</i></p> | <p>Metro has begun exploring a pilot program, including opportunities to leverage local homeless funding and partnerships in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Community Development Authority.</p> |

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| 12 | Metro does not have access to dedicated 24/7 crisis/emergency shelter beds | Secure Crisis or Interim Housing Beds Dedicated to Metro Clients That Are Accessible 24/7 and available throughout the County(Interim Housing/Emergency Shelter/Motels) | <p><i>Metro should pursue partnerships to secure a minimum of 50 crisis beds at various locations around the County.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Metro can pull from lessons learned by the Home At Last Pilot, by seeking intensive support services like healthcare are provided onsite, which will expand the capacity of outreach teams to focus on outreach activities. - Metro should prioritize reserved beds that are low-barrier, practice harm reduction, and are non-congregate when possible. - Metro should continue to utilize motel stays on a limited basis to quickly address housing needs. However, this intervention is expensive and would add additional costs for supportive services. - Metro outreach teams should also seek to leverage County and City resources to identify crisis/interim beds within the existing shelter network. | <i>Provide immediate housing to those in need, reducing the number of individuals seeking shelter on the system.</i> | Metro will need to work with our partners in the City and County to accomplish this recommendation as there is no 24 hour facility in the county and Metro currently lacks funding for this recommendation. |
| 13 | The County has a lack of available housing and supportive services to quickly move the unhoused to | Increase Throughputs into Housing Through Utilization of Metro Property | <p><i>Metro should continue to explore no-cost leases for tiny home villages and safe parking sites</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Metro should continue exploring innovative housing and service approaches, including tiny home villages, | <i>Reducing housing instability through increasing the supply of permanent</i> | Metro will continue to seek and prioritize interim housing partnerships that provide direct referrals and dedicated beds |

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| | permanent housing. | | <p>safe parking sites, and safe storage facilities on available Metro property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partners must ensure that if Metro provides no-cost leases, beds can be made available to Metro riders. | <i>supportive housing.</i> | for Metro riders on Metro property. |
| 14 | Metro's Joint Development Policies focus on creating affordable housing, but do not require developments to specifically house those that were formerly unhoused. | Include Housing for Formerly Homeless Individuals in Joint Development on Metro Property | <p><i>Metro can provide incentives to developers on joint development sites to encourage incorporation of Permanent Supportive Housing units.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Metro's current Joint Development Policy centralizes on the principle of "affordable first" which supports reducing inflows into homelessness</i> - Additional incentives and community engagement should be completed to assess whether there are opportunities to house those that formerly experienced homelessness as part of future developments. - Metro will need to work with local government, regional partners, developers, and others to support the financing and operations of such development | Reducing housing instability through increasing the supply of permanent supportive housing. | The HOME unit will work with Metro's joint development team to explore ways to include Permanent Supportive Housing units in developments on Metro property. |

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| 15 | Lack of public knowledge and available information on resources for unhoused riders, and what Metro is doing to address this challenge. | Create an Education and Public Information Campaign to Address Visibility and Highlight Resources Available to Unhoused and Low-Income Ridership | <p><i>Launch an education and public information campaign regarding Metro's Homeless Outreach efforts and resources.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Metro should create a public information campaign that highlights resources available to unhoused and low-income ridership, including Metro resources such as the homeless outreach teams and external resources available through partners like DHS and LAHSA, such as the LA Homeless Outreach Portal (https://www.lahsa.org/portal/apps/la-hop/). - Metro should utilize advertising space available on Metro Property and equip Transit Ambassadors with information on resources for unhoused riders. | <i>Creating more familiarity with Metro's efforts to meaningfully address homelessness, and how riders and other stakeholders can be part of the solution to address the crisis.</i> | The HOME unit will prioritize educating Metro's external partners and the public on Metro's efforts and role in addressing the region's homeless crisis. |