

## **West Los Angeles Bridge Housing Proposal Frequently Asked Questions**

1. Where is the West Los Angeles National Guard Armory?

The West LA Armory is located at 1300 Federal Ave. Los Angeles, California, 90025. The proposed Bridge Housing program structure would be built on the Northeast corner of the parking lot.

2. Why is the Armory being changed from a Winter Shelter to Bridge Housing?

A Winter Shelter has operated at the West Los Angeles Armory for more than 10 years. Winter shelters are an outdated model that have not proven effective in diminishing long-term homelessness, although they do provide critical life-saving shelter from the elements for people who have nowhere else to sleep. In April 2017, the Board of Supervisors moved to examine all winter shelters in the County to determine if they could better serve the County's growing homeless population by becoming year-round 24/7 crisis housing or bridge housing sites.

3. What is Bridge Housing and how is it different from a Winter Shelter?

Winter Shelters have been around for numerous decades, and are designed to shelter many people, usually on cots, overnight for a temporary period during the winter months. Bridge Housing is 24-hour dormitory-style living quarters that give people experiencing homelessness greater access to wrap-around services in a safe and comfortable living environment. Bridge Housing is used to house people temporarily while they get help finding and transitioning into permanent housing. Bridge Housing combines a safe place for people experiencing homelessness to sleep and the comprehensive wrap-around services they need to successfully obtain and retain permanent housing. In summary, Bridge housing differs from winter shelter in both the physical design (bridge housing provides more comfortable and semi-private sleeping areas), the hours of operation (bridge housing is open 24 a day and encourages clients to stay onsite to receive services during the day), and the service model (bridge housing provides ample wrap-around services).

4. Why is Bridge Housing important?

Many parts of the country, including Los Angeles County, are facing a tremendous homelessness crisis as a result of increasing rents and stagnating incomes. Thankfully the voters of Los Angeles supported Measure H and LA City Proposition HHH that are allowing the County and City to expand housing and services. This historic investment is expanding homelessness prevention, outreach, safe parking, interim housing (including bridge housing), rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, social services and employment opportunities. Bridge Housing is a critical component of our homeless crisis response system that allows outreach teams to help people on a path to permanent housing have a safe place to sleep while they are being navigated to permanent housing. It is important to remember that the homeless crisis response system is

expanding across all of Los Angeles County and bridge housing is just one critical component of that expansion

5. Where does the funding for the Bridge Housing come from?

In March 2017 Los Angeles County voters overwhelmingly voted to pass Measure H; a quarter-cent sales tax expected to generate \$355 million annually for the next ten years. Measure H will support 47 Homeless Strategies that the Board of Supervisors approved in 2016. Of those 47 strategies, strategy E8 will support the implementation of Bridge Housing by enhancing and expanding emergency shelters throughout the entire County.

The Los Angeles City Council and Mayor Garcetti also created A Bridge Home program in the City's FY 2018-2019 budget. A Bridge Home provides capital funding to expand Bridge Housing throughout the City of Los Angeles and in every Council District.

6. When can we expect the West LA Bridge Housing to open?

Our office has begun exploratory conversations with the National Guard to close the winter shelter program and build a bridge housing program on a portion of the Armory parking lot. Creating this bridge housing program will be a slow moving process that requires both state and federal legislation before a lease could be executed and construction could begin. It is unlikely even if the proposal is found to be feasible that construction could begin before 2020.

Los Angeles County and the City of Los Angeles are only exploring the feasibility of opening Bridge Housing at the West Los Angeles Armory. Depending on the outcome of a robust community process, a firm decision about whether to proceed and a timeline would be developed towards the end of 2019.

7. Who will operate the Bridge Housing Program?

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) has competitively procured 18 Bridge Housing operators that have demonstrated their ability to operate the highest quality Bridge Housing. If the proposal for this Bridge Housing proceeds, an operator would be chosen by LAHSA from this list.

8. Who will occupy the Bridge Housing?

The Bridge Housing will be used to provide safe sleeping accommodations for individuals experiencing homelessness that are in West Los Angeles or surrounding neighborhoods and will have a low barrier to entry. The program will have a housing-first model. There will be no walk-ins accepted at the program (so there will not be a line of people waiting to get in).

9. What sort of amenities/services will the Bridge Housing program offer?

The proposed facility could include a dining and recreation space and private case management offices. Facilities would be made ADA accessible. Best practices for Bridge Housing also include

laundry facilities, outdoor areas for service animals, outdoor recreation areas, and storage for belongings and bicycles.

10. Are there similar Bridge Housing programs in Los Angeles that I can learn more about?

There are existing year-round bridge housing programs through Los Angeles Family Housing (LAFH) in North Hollywood and the People Concern in Santa Monica. The City of LA opened the first A Bridge Home Program in downtown Los Angeles in August 2018. Additional A Bridge Home sites will open in Hollywood in early 2019 and in Venice and Sylmar in mid-2019.

11. How will the proposal impact public safety in West Los Angeles?

There is no definitive way of predicting if a Bridge Housing site will have an impact on public safety, but through community outreach and engagement with LAPD and LAFD, every effort is being made to ensure that public safety is enhanced by this proposal. Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) violations to LAMC 85.02 and 56.11 will likely be reduced solely based on the fact that fewer people will be out on the streets. It is also important to remember that research clearly demonstrates that people experiencing homelessness are much more likely to be victims of crime rather than perpetrators of crime. By providing a safe place for these men and women to stay we can prevent them from being victimized on the streets and reduce crime in the community.

12. How much security will be provided at the Bridge Housing?

Ample security is an important component of the Bridge Housing model. All Bridge Housing programs have 24/7 security.

13. What will happen next?

Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl and LA City Councilman Mike Bonin are committed to a robust community process to determine the feasibility of this proposal. There will be a wide variety of community meetings throughout the winter and spring of 2019 before any decisions about the future of the proposal are made. Additionally, with support from Assemblymember Bloom and Senator Feinstein, we are simultaneously pursuing state and federal legislation that would allow the long-term use of the property for Bridge Housing. We encourage stakeholders to stay informed, actively participate in the discussion, and help us get the word out about meetings and events.

14. How can I continue to be informed about the Bridge Housing?

Supervisor Kuehl's office maintains a website about the Bridge Housing at [www.supervisorkuehl.com/westla](http://www.supervisorkuehl.com/westla). The website also includes the opportunity to sign-up for updates.