

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Evaluation of the Care, Treatment and Rehabilitative Services (CTRS) Program

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Problem Statement

Los Angeles is facing an affordable housing and homelessness crisis. According to Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's 2022 point-in-time (PIT) count, there are approximately 70,000 people experiencing homelessness within the County of Los Angeles.¹ Comparatively, the RAND Corporation's 2022 survey of homelessness in Los Angeles County finds that 69,144 individuals are unhoused.² See *Appendix A* for a geographic spread of the County's homeless population). Veteran homelessness in Los Angeles is roughly 5% of that. From 2020 to 2022, the PIT data also points to an 11% decline in homelessness among veterans, whereas homelessness overall has risen by 4.1%.³ According to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), which is a federal agency, the drop can be attributed to a piece of legislation called the Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020, which "gave the VA more flexibility to use funds for 'life-saving goods and services' during the pandemic, including food, shelter in motels or hotels, transportation and phones for telehealth."⁴ This contributes to lower rates of homelessness due to the increased engagement veterans have with service providers who connect them to the Coordinated Entry System (CES) and the most appropriate permanent housing solutions.

¹ LAHSA. (2022, September). *La county HC22 data summary*. LAHSA. Retrieved December 4, 2022, from <https://www.lahsa.org/documents?id=6515-lacounty-hc22-data-summary>

² Ward, J., Garvey, R., & Hunter, S. (2022). Recent Trends Among the Unsheltered in Three Los Angeles Neighborhoods: An Interim Report on the Los Angeles Longitudinal Enumeration and Demographic Survey (LA LEADS) Project. Retrieved 21 April 2023, from https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1890-1.html

³ HUD. (2022, November 3). *FACT SHEET: New Point-in-Time Data Reveals Decrease in Veteran Homelessness*. HUD. Retrieved December 4, 2022, from https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/HUD_No_22_227

⁴ Hall, M. (2022, November 30). Veteran homelessness drops by more than half since 2010. NewsNation. Retrieved February 14, 2023, from <https://www.newsnationnow.com/solutions/veteran-homelessness-shrunk-by-more-than-half-since-2010/#:~:text=Veteran%20homelessness%20shrunk%20by%20more%20than%20half%20since%202010&ext=A%20homeless%20encampment%20sits%20on,just%20the%20past%20two%20years.>

Moreover, Los Angeles has been ramping up its homelessness prevention and response programs over the last decade. One intervention provided is temporary housing in the form of pallet shelters, which are used in the interim between the street and permanent housing. These pallet shelters are purchased by the City of Los Angeles and run by various homeless service providers.⁵ Typically, there are also onsite meals, showers, case management, housing navigation, mental health, job training, and placement services.⁶ These tiny homes or pallet shelters are a type of transitional housing that has been growing in number and in popularity in Los Angeles over the last few years.⁷ A typical tiny shelter is 64 sq. ft. in size and has two beds, heat, air-conditioning, windows, a small desk, and a front door. Consensus holds that “[w]hile the length of stay varies and flexibility is important, many communities envision a tenancy that is between three months to a year.”⁸ The goal is to prepare and assist residents for a move into permanent housing so residents will stay as long as they need to, provided they comply with program rules and are not exited.

Specifically, the CTRS program in Brentwood—started by the VA in collaboration with Village for Vets and with input from various stakeholders and community members—has gotten praise for its success in clearing up a nearby encampment that received attention due to two residents’ murders.⁹ Through the hard work of Village for

⁵ Staff. (2021, February 4). *Tiny Home Villages*. Hope of the Valley. Retrieved December 3, 2023, from <https://www.hopeofthevalley.org/tinyhomes/>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Smith, D. (2020, December 12). \$130,000 for an 8-foot-by-8-foot shed? that's what L.A. is paying in a bid to house the homeless. Los Angeles Times. Retrieved February 14, 2023, from <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-12-12/los-angeles-tiny-homes-homeless>

⁸ Kirkey, K. (2022, October 5). The role of interim housing as a homelessness response. All Home. Retrieved February 14, 2023, from <https://www.allhomeca.org/2022/10/05/the-role-of-interim-housing-as-a-homelessness-response/>

⁹ Haskell, J. (2021, October 30). *Homeless Brentwood Vets moved to housing before encampments are cleared*. ABC7 Los Angeles. Retrieved December 4, 2022, from <https://abc7.com/homeless-veterans-encampments-brentwood-va-homelessness-in-southern-california/11181571/>

Vets, which provides services to highly vulnerable veterans in the LA area, tiny pallet shelters were provided for homeless veterans on the West Los Angeles Veteran Affairs campus. The program at the West LA Veterans Affairs campus has been running since April 2020 after its grassroots founding by Village for Vets, a citizen initiative established by Marcie Pollier-Schwartz.¹⁰ After three years, now is the time to study its cost-effectiveness, evaluate its effectiveness at addressing the underlying issue of homelessness among veterans, and assess the impact of its service delivery model. There is relatively little data on the CTRS program as an effective intervention. This study determines metrics with which to measure success through interviewing stakeholders and also evaluates the program efficacy and value of this investment using qualitative data provided by study participants and quantitative data provided by the A-Mark Foundation. Thus, this study fills in the knowledge gaps.

Background and Literature Review

Housing First and Low Barrier Principles

Generally, Housing First is the guiding model for homeless services.¹¹ In 2009, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) adopted Housing First as a way to address an unhoused subpopulation of those living with severe addiction or mental illness.¹² In 2014, the VA adopted the Housing First model as a national policy.¹³

¹⁰ The VA greater los angeles healthcare system to institute new Safety Protocols for CTRS residents: VA greater los angeles health care. Veterans Affairs. (2022). Retrieved April 10, 2023, from <https://www.va.gov/greater-los-angeles-health-care/news-releases/the-va-greater-los-angeles-healthcare-system-to-institute-new-safety-protocols-for-ctrs-residents/>

¹¹ Woodhall-Melnik, J. R., & Dunn, J. R. (2015). A systematic review of outcomes associated with participation in Housing First Programs. *Housing Studies*, 31(3), 287–304. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2015.1080816>

¹² Flanagan, D., & Steeb, M. (2020, March 8). *California is its own worst enemy when it comes to homelessness. but here's how the state can start to make real change*. CalMatters. Retrieved April 7, 2023, from <https://calmatters.org/commentary/2020/03/california-homeless-housing-first-policy-is-failing/>

¹³ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (n.d.). *Housing First Implementation Brief*. VA National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans. Retrieved April 7, 2023, from <https://www.va.gov/homeless/nchav/docs/Housing-First-Implementation-brief.pdf>

Housing First has its origins in the “supported housing model,” which developed in response to the “staircase model,” where housing was provided last to patients experiencing mental illness.¹⁴ Housing First was developed by Dr. Sam Tsemberis in the 1990s and applied broadly to people experiencing homelessness.¹⁵ Research has proven that it is a more effective model of care than previous ones.¹⁶ It is an evidence-based solution to ending homelessness that prioritizes the unconditional provision of permanent and stable housing to individuals experiencing homelessness.¹⁷ It is an alternative to traditional programs that require an individual to get “housing ready” by meeting program requirements typically while unsheltered or in transitional housing. It is “based on the premise that this population will have superior housing and recovery outcomes if given immediate access to permanent, independent housing of their choice, and provided with flexible case management services.”¹⁸

However, the Housing First model falls short when there is a shortage of affordable housing stock, like in Los Angeles.¹⁹ Generally, affordable housing is defined as costing no more than 30% of a household’s gross income.²⁰ Last year, an article reported that upon review of city records, the City of Los Angeles “lost about 111,000 homes that were considered affordable for low-income households... Over the same

¹⁴ Ellen, G. & O’Flaherty, B, eds. (2010). *How to House the Homeless*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Kuhn, R; Culhane, D.P. (1998). "Applying Cluster Analysis to Test a Typology of Homelessness by Pattern of Shelter Utilization: Results from the Analysis of Administrative Data"

¹⁷ *Housing First*. Downtown Women’s Center. (2020, October 1). Retrieved February 14, 2023, from <https://downtownwomenscenter.org/housing-first/>

¹⁸ Zerger, S., Francombe Pridham, K., Jeyaratnam, J., Connelly, J., Hwang, S., O’Campo, P., & Stergiopoulos, V. (2014). The role and meaning of interim housing in housing First programs for people experiencing homelessness and mental illness. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 84(4), 431–437. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0099842>

¹⁹ LA County. (n.d.). *Affordable Housing*. Homeless Initiative. Retrieved April 5, 2023, from <https://homeless.lacounty.gov/affordable-housing/>

²⁰ *HUD Archives: Glossary of terms to affordable housing*. HUD. (n.d.). Retrieved April 7, 2023, from <https://archives.hud.gov/local/nv/goodstories/2006-04-06glos.cfm>

period, about 13,000 new homes affordable to such households were built.”²¹

Furthermore, in the County of Los Angeles, there is a shortage of 500,000 affordable units.²² With the current shortage, now is an appropriate time to utilize low-barrier shelters to get individuals off the streets and help them eventually transition into permanent housing.

The definition of “low-barrier” shelter varies across service providers, but essentially it “means that the requirements for entry are limited or minimal.”²³ For example, program participants will not be required to get sober and will still qualify for housing regardless of legal history, and immigration status, among other barriers. There is also a focus on “harm reduction,” which is “a set of practical strategies and ideas” that meets people with high-risk behaviors (e.g., substance use) where they are at.²⁴ Harm reduction addresses the conditions of risk by calling for the provision of services and resources. It also addresses the risk itself to reduce the negative consequences associated with the risky behavior without mitigating the associated real harm and danger.²⁵ Harm reduction recognizes how “social inequalities affect both people’s vulnerability to and capacity for effectively dealing with potential harm.”²⁶ Low-barrier shelters reflect Housing First principles and thus encourage individuals experiencing homelessness to seek resources by eliminating certain obstacles.

²¹ Rohrlich, T. (2023, February 9). *La loses much more affordable housing than it gains*. LAist. Retrieved April 5, 2023, from <https://laist.com/news/politics/la-loses-much-more-affordable-housing-than-it-gains>

²² LA County. (n.d.). *Affordable Housing*. Homeless Initiative. Retrieved April 5, 2023, from <https://homeless.lacounty.gov/affordable-housing/>

²³ Moix, C. (2022, August 24). What it means to be a low-barrier homeless shelter. Springs Rescue Mission. Retrieved March 20, 2023, from <https://www.springsrescuemission.org/what-it-means-to-be-a-low-barrier-homeless-shelter/#:~:text=Although%20the%20exact%20definition%20of,resources%20by%20eliminating%20those%20obstacles.>

²⁴ National Harm Reduction Coalition. (2022, December 20). Harm reduction principles. National Harm Reduction Coalition. Retrieved March 20, 2023, from <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

The History of Tiny Homes

During the early 2000s, many people living in America began turning to drastically smaller homes to combat rising real estate costs and to achieve a more minimalist lifestyle.²⁷ Researchers have found tiny homes useful in many cases, including for individuals aiming to save money,²⁸ frequent business travelers,²⁹ or as means for individuals to live an alternative lifestyle off the grid.³⁰ In 2010, tiny homes gained traction as possible solutions for housing the chronically homeless population, specifically homeless veterans, as these villages provide “a tailored environment that is highly favorable to veterans attempting to transition from military life to the civilian world.”³¹ In 2019, researchers created a database of all the tiny homes available to individuals experiencing homelessness throughout America. This database was composed of information on variables such as the size of the units available, the communal facilities available, whether the units have electricity, and many other factors.³² This database indicated that there were 115 tiny home villages (THV) (i.e., tiny home communities) for the unhoused in the United States at the time. The database development primarily focused on gathering the geographic location of the THV, the

²⁷ McGee, M. P., & McGuffin, R. D. (2021). Tiny home villages for homeless veterans. In *Cities and homelessness: Essays and case studies on practices, innovations and challenges* (pp. 195–199). essay, McFarland & Company, Inc.

²⁸ Ford, J., & Gomez-Lanier, L. (2017). Are Tiny Homes Here to Stay? A Review of Literature on the Tiny House Movement. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 45(4), 394; Shahani, A. (2015, November 2). Could a Tiny Mobile Studio Solve Your Housing Crisis? NPR’s All Tech Considered, from <http://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2015/11/02/453975501/could-a-tiny-mobile-studio-solve-your-housing-crisis>

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ford, J., & Gomez-Lanier, L. (2017). Are Tiny Homes Here to Stay? A Review of Literature on the Tiny House Movement. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 45(4), 394; Murphy, M. (2014). Tiny Houses as Appropriate Technology. *Communities*, Number 165 (Winter 2014): pp. 54–59.

³¹ McGee, M. P., & McGuffin, R. D. (2021). Tiny home villages for homeless veterans. In *Cities and homelessness: Essays and case studies on practices, innovations and challenges* (pp. 195–199). essay, McFarland & Company, Inc.

³² Evans, K. (2020) Tackling Homelessness with Tiny Houses: An Inventory of Tiny House Villages in the United States, *The Professional Geographer*, 72:3, 360-370, DOI: 10.1080/00330124.2020.1744170

physical characteristics of these villages, and the social services offered in the communities. Thus, the data collection did not extend to include how many individuals were provided housing within each community. The average number of tiny homes within each village was thirty-five homes. Although, there was a wide range in the sizes of the villages with the smallest community having only two tiny homes and the largest community hosting 153 tiny homes.

One subpopulation that makes up a large percentage of the homeless population in the United States is veterans.³³ Research has deduced that efforts to raise funds for the unhoused veteran population while increasing awareness of the issue has resulted in decreasing the prevalence of homeless veterans by 56%.³⁴ Even still, the homeless population in America contains a large number of veterans and is cause for concern. Advocates for tiny home communities for veterans, in particular, claim that these communities provide veterans with autonomy and a safe place to return to as needed.³⁵ In addition, these communities can provide veterans with camaraderie and a support system for people with similar life experiences. For public policy purposes, research has dictated that compared to traditional shelters, tiny homes take less time to build and are cheaper to construct and maintain while also being considered more humane and private for those residing in them.³⁶ A literature review on tiny homes found “that tiny houses have the most long-term promise when used as temporary housing, whether that is transitional housing for the homeless, guest homes, or an alternative to hotel

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ National Alliance to End Homelessness. 2017. Ending chronic homelessness saves taxpayers money. Accessed June 2, 2019. <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/ending-chronic-homelessness-saves-taxpayers-money-2/>.

³⁵ McGee, M. P., & McGuffin, R. D. (2021). Tiny home villages for homeless veterans. In *Cities and homelessness: Essays and case studies on practices, innovations and challenges* (pp. 195–199). essay, McFarland & Company, Inc.

³⁶ Ibid.

accommodations for travelers.”³⁷ Many considerations go into creating a THV for people experiencing homelessness and specifically for unhoused veterans. For instance, THVs for veterans throughout the country have found it beneficial to utilize an incremental approach where individuals are slowly immersed into the tiny village community, as going from extreme isolation to extreme socialization can be overwhelming for people.³⁸

THVs throughout the United States have found success in providing some form of shelter to folks who otherwise may not have access to secure and stable housing.³⁹ Seattle began a program in 2016 that provided 14 8-foot-by-12-foot homes in each village, with each home costing \$2,200 to construct.⁴⁰ Each home has access to shared community amenities, including a kitchen and restrooms. Additionally, each house could hold up to a family of three; a family that otherwise may have been separated in a shelter due to gender restrictions in living quarters.⁴¹ Residents in this village are required to pay \$90 each month for the cost of utilities. It is important to note that many other tiny villages have found success in providing shelter to those experiencing homelessness without those individuals having to pay for the utilities or any other costs,

³⁷ Ford, J., & Gomez-Lanier, L. (2017). Are Tiny Homes Here to Stay? A Review of Literature on the Tiny House Movement. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 45(4), 394.

³⁸ McGee, M. P., & McGuffin, R. D. (2021). Tiny home villages for homeless veterans. In *Cities and homelessness: Essays and case studies on practices, innovations and challenges* (pp. 195–199). essay, McFarland & Company, Inc.; Veterans Community Project (2019). <https://www.veteranscommunityproject.org>.

³⁹ Ford, J., & Gomez-Lanier, L. (2017). Are Tiny Homes Here to Stay? A Review of Literature on the Tiny House Movement. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 45(4), 394.

⁴⁰ Ford, J., & Gomez-Lanier, L. (2017). Are Tiny Homes Here to Stay? A Review of Literature on the Tiny House Movement. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 45(4), 394.; Johnson, G. (2016, January 19). Tiny house village for the homeless set to open this week. KIRO—Seattle. Retrieved January 20, 2016, from http://m.kirotv.com/news/news/national/seattles-first-tiny-house-village-homeless-open-we/np7S3/?icmp=cmgcontent_internallink_relatedcontent_2014_morepopularheadlines3

⁴¹ Ford, J., & Gomez-Lanier, L. (2017). Are Tiny Homes Here to Stay? A Review of Literature on the Tiny House Movement. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 45(4), 394; McGee, M. P.; McGuffin, R. D. (2021). Tiny home villages for homeless veterans. In *Cities and homelessness: Essays and case studies on practices, innovations and challenges* (pp. 195–199). essay, McFarland & Company, Inc.

including tiny villages in Olympia, Washington; Austin, Texas; and Eugene, Oregon, all of which were funded by churches and nonprofit organizations.⁴²

A study of a THV for the people experiencing homelessness in Tallahassee, Florida, aimed to determine if the THV was an effective means of filling the gap for temporary housing for individuals experiencing homelessness.⁴³ The research utilized interviews with stakeholders and developers of the project to gain insight into the development's effectiveness. These interviews included conversations with staff, residents, and county planners to gain an understanding of how the communities were developed, public reaction to the proposal, unexpected barriers to the process, "and types of intercommunication between the nonprofits, the County, adjacent neighborhoods, and future residents."⁴⁴ Within this case study, researchers examined the planning of the community, constraints associated with implementing this development, and residents' experiences. Their findings ultimately revealed that tiny home developments can be a useful tactic to reduce homelessness. A primary challenge to developing the village was pushback from the community, which made it difficult to obtain a site for the THV. Massive community outreach and a coordinated effort by a group dedicated to finding a way to provide all people with a second chance resulted in many of the public's concerns being mitigated.

However, there has been some criticism of the price tag of these tiny home villages. For example, a THV that opened on an empty city lot in North Hollywood was

⁴² Ford, J., & Gomez-Lanier, L. (2017). Are Tiny Homes Here to Stay? A Review of Literature on the Tiny House Movement. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 45(4), 394.; Priesnitz, W. (2014). *Tiny Houses, Tiny Neighborhoods*. *Natural Life Magazine* (March/April 2014): pp.12–19.

⁴³ Jackson, A., Callea, B., Stampar, N., Sanders, A., De Los Rios, A., & Pierce, J. (2020). Exploring Tiny Homes as an Affordable Housing Strategy to Ameliorate Homelessness: A Case Study of the Dwellings in Tallahassee, FL. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(2), 661. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17020661>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

compared to a similar project in the city of Riverside. The cost of the North Hollywood project was \$8.6 million⁴⁵, whereas the Riverside project had a total cost of about \$514,000.⁴⁶

Additional research has found that some of the significant hardships that tiny home villages for the unhoused may face include difficulty finding funding resources to construct and maintain these villages, gaining land use within the broader community, and issues related to helping people move out of these communities into permanent housing.⁴⁷ Researchers have identified that to avoid long-term residents, it could be beneficial for tiny home communities to ensure that they have sustained case management teams located within the community and partnerships with local businesses that are willing to hire the residents.⁴⁸ THVs in California, specifically in Sonoma County, have also faced difficulty due to the natural disasters that are common in the state.⁴⁹ Based on the successes and failures of various THVs for unhoused veterans, research has indicated that it's essential that effective pre-planning occur prior to building the THV.⁵⁰ Additionally, research suggests some best practices for building a tiny home community for people experiencing homelessness includes,

Conduct extensive research into local homelessness issues and diversify

stakeholders accordingly...employ support from local businesses and veterans

⁴⁵ Walker, A. (2021, April 27). L.A. built a tiny-house village for the homeless. some aren't so sure about it. Curbed. Retrieved February 14, 2023, from <https://www.curbed.com/2021/04/tiny-home-village-homeless-los-angeles.html>

⁴⁶ The Times Editorial Board. (2020, December 24). Editorial: L.A.'s village of tiny homes comes with a giant price tag. Los Angeles Times. Retrieved February 14, 2023, from <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2020-12-24/editorial-l-a-s-village-of-tiny-homes-comes-with-a-giant-price-tag>

⁴⁷ McGee, M. P., & McGuffin, R. D. (2021). Tiny home villages for homeless veterans. In *Cities and homelessness: Essays and case studies on practices, innovations and challenges* (pp. 195–199). essay, McFarland & Company, Inc.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

for construction of the project... ensure a career development pipeline is in place to maintain the integrity of the transitional housing model...Maintain local support by interacting with local media, businesses, non-profit organizations, and social events. Help close the gap of isolation by integrating these homeless veterans throughout society...⁵¹

Care, Treatment and Rehabilitative Services (CTRS) Program

The Veteran Affairs Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System (VAGLAHS) runs the Care, Treatment and Rehabilitative Services (CTRS) Program on the VA West Los Angeles Campus. The overarching U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is a federal department with the mission “To fulfill President Lincoln’s promise to care for those who have served in our nation’s military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors.”⁵² Additionally, the VA has five core values, integrity, commitment, advocacy, respect, and excellence.⁵³ CTRS is funded by the VA, various nonprofit organizations, and private donations.⁵⁴ According to the VA’s website, “CTRS is a pilot initiative that provides unsheltered homeless Veterans expanded access to VA services during the COVID-19 pandemic” and has continued through time.⁵⁵ Their goal is to improve healthcare outcomes while guiding unsheltered homeless veterans toward permanent housing solutions. CTRS evolved from a sanctioned encampment on the West Los Angeles Campus to a tiny home community that provides various services, including healthcare,

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. About the Department. (April 7, 2023). Retrieved May 2, 2023, from <https://department.va.gov/about/>

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ *Village Profile - Village for Vets*. (n.d.). Retrieved March 28, 2023, from https://palletshelter.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/21_Pallet_CaseStudies-VA-1.pdf

⁵⁵ *Greater Los Angeles VA offers services for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness: Va Greater Los Angeles Health Care*. Veterans Affairs. (n.d.). Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.va.gov/greater-los-angeles-health-care/news-releases/greater-los-angeles-va-offers-services-for-veterans-experiencing-homelessness/>

case management, peer support, meal services, a clean environment, and transitional housing assistance.⁵⁶ University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), an organization involved with CTRS, provides some program data on their website. According to UCLA at the time of publishing, CTRS had seen 545 veterans admitted since April 2020.⁵⁷ The average age was 54 years, but ages ranged from 24-80, with 94% male-identified and 6% female-identified program participants.⁵⁸ Race/ethnicity was 52% White, 41% Black/African American, and 14% Hispanic/Latino.⁵⁹ The average length of stay was 70 days.⁶⁰

UCLA data also showed there was low service connection among program participants meaning that they were not receiving benefits and services they are entitled to through the VA.⁶¹ Out of the 105 program participants that they surveyed, 25 participants were 100% service-connected (i.e., receive \$4200 a month from VA).⁶² Additionally, a review by UCLA found that while living at CTRS, Veterans had low rates of engagement in traditional VA care. This is demonstrated by the fact that 45% of 474 total primary care visits were missed, and 67% of 502 total mental health/substance use disorder visits were missed.⁶³ Thus, CTRS provides services to highly vulnerable veterans with higher acuity; they require more than the traditional services offered by the VA. Per UCLA's chart review, 92% of program participants had a mental health diagnosis within the past 5 years. Furthermore, 65% of program participants had a

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ *Center of excellence - project CTRS*. UCLA Center for Health Services and Society. (2022, August 15). Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://hss.semel.ucla.edu/coe-project-ctrs/>

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

diagnosis of serious mental illness (schizophrenia spectrum or other psychotic disorder or bipolar disorder) in the past 5 years. Lastly, UCLA found that in 2019 (a year before their stay at CTRS), Veterans at CTRS had high rates of acute care use, as evidenced by the fact that 62% of program participants had 4 or more emergency department visits and 51% had 1 or more inpatient stays on a medical/surgical or psychiatric unit.⁶⁴

While the tiny home village on the VA West Los Angeles Campus is currently being run and funded by CTRS, it is essential to note that Village for Vets, a nonprofit organization in Los Angeles, was crucial in developing and gaining the initial funding for this tiny home community. Village for Vets' mission is to fill "...critical gaps in key services for homeless and at-risk veterans on their journey to stability and independence in greater Los Angeles and beyond."⁶⁵ Before donating the tiny homes to the VA, Village for Vets owned and operated the community.

Methods

Study Design

The research objectives were to determine metrics of success with which to evaluate CTRS as a homelessness intervention by assessing the program's cost-effectiveness, effectiveness at addressing the underlying issue of homelessness among veterans, and the impact of its service delivery model. This study also makes recommendations for improving these proposed interventions in consideration of the program's scalability and applicability. Before commencing the research process, the researchers submitted a proposal to and received approval from Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). This study obtained data utilizing two

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ About Village for Vets. (n.d.) Retrieved May 2, 2023, from <https://www.villageforvets.org/about>

different methods. The first method was semi-structured interviews conducted virtually with various stakeholders connected to the CTRS tiny homes community in Los Angeles, CA. These interviews provided insight into the current program, its effectiveness, and the costs associated with running the program. The second method was an in-depth cost analysis to provide an estimate for the construction and maintenance of a tiny home community similar to CTRS. The estimated annual operating cost for the CTRS program was produced based on estimates from the service provider operating budget for Chandler Blvd found in the 2022 A-Mark Foundation report. (See *Appendix C*).

Measures

Qualitative

The researchers contacted interviewees from three different categories to schedule interviews with individuals interested in participating. The three categories included partner organizations, program administrators, and community members. Some study participants provided referrals for other interviewees based on preexisting relationships. Interviewees from partner organizations consisted of those who were involved in the integration of services with CTRS. Interviewees from program administrators consisted of individuals who were involved with the implementation and/or maintenance of CTRS. Finally, the interviewees from community members consisted of individuals from various local neighborhood communities. Each of the interviews ranged from thirty minutes to an hour in length. These interviews were conducted virtually, following a semi-structured interview protocol, differing between the three different categories of interviewees, with questions that focused on program

knowledge, descriptions of their involvement with CTRS, and individual definitions of success and failure. (See *Appendix B* for a copy of the interview questionnaire.) The researchers used a thematic analysis framework for interviews to draw meaningful conclusions from qualitative data. The interviews were then coded using the rigorous and accelerated data reduction (RADaR) technique to determine themes across the various categories.

Quantitative

The researchers attempted to obtain quantitative data on the CTRS tiny home community from CTRS and various other nonprofit organizations that work with CTRS. In doing so, the researchers hoped to obtain data on various costs, including construction costs, operational costs for the THV, and data on occupancy rates and where residents exit upon leaving the community. The researchers were able to obtain some of this quantitative data, however, there is room for future researchers to obtain more quantitative data on CTRS. The researchers were also able to reasonably estimate the costs that CTRS incurs by reviewing a 2022 report published by the A-Mark Foundation, which documented the costs of other THVs within the City of Los Angeles.⁶⁶ The researchers referenced the 2022 A-Mark Foundation report for the price of construction per bed and used that number to calculate an estimate for CTRS's cost per bed. The 2022 A-Mark Foundation report did not outline other individual varying costs, such as special programming including the cost of special events like holiday celebrations. At this time, special programming for CTRS is funded by various nonprofit organizations.

⁶⁶ Tiny Home Villages: Construction and Operating Costs of Tiny Homes to Decrease Homelessness in Los Angeles. The A-Mark Foundation. (2022, March 2). Retrieved March 4, 2023, from <https://amarkfoundation.org/tiny-home-villages/>

Results

Qualitative Interviews

In order to standardize disparate language collected from interviews, data from transcripts were organized by theme. This process called the rigorous and accelerated data reduction, also known as the RADaR technique, assigned labels to recurrent themes from each response. The 17 codes developed from transcribed interviews were: (1) THV capacity, (2) staffing problems, (3) origins of CTRS, (4) other miscellaneous problems with CTRS, (5) funding needs, (6) funding sources, (7) policy/government roadblocks, (8) policy/government initiatives, (9) things CTRS does well, (10) benefits of low barrier housing, (11) veteran homelessness, (12) trust in CTRS, (13) participant entry/exit, (14) community response, (15) future of CTRS, (16) recommendations, (17) rules and regulations.

The key findings from this study are tabulated below.

Table 1: Participant Recommendations for Improving Outcomes of CTRS

Key Perceived Challenges	Participant Recommendations	Supporting Narratives
Tiny homes are not filled to full capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire more on-site staff to manage intake and exit paperwork • Develop a marketing plan to advertise the program to other unhoused veterans seeking shelter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There are 30 to 40 empty tiny homes every night, but the VA says they don't have enough staff to fill them all.” • “They need to be, you know, filling those units and keeping it staffed, and you know, working through and getting people into housing and bringing more veterans in. Just keep a constant flow going if the goal really is to end veteran homelessness.” • “Having adequate staffing there, and incentives for staff to be there, so that way units

		<p>aren't going unused. I think that's one of the big things that needs to happen.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Shortage of staff is also a problem at times, leading to occasional service delivery issues.”
<p>Veterans seeking shelter are turned away from the CTRS program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the hours of operation • Increase the number of drop-in shelters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The VA was operating on these banker hours. So if veterans were showing up past like 2:30 PM, they were being told to come back the following day. So what would happen is they would go, you know, to try to check in and register they would be told, “No, you can't register today. You have to come back in a day or 2.” Then the VA Police would ask them to leave the property. Then they would be out on the sidewalk. And then, as you can imagine, at that point, it's much harder to get them back in, because the trust was severed.” • “We asked for, you know, drop-in shelters, which we do have. So, 6 of the tiny homes are designated as drop-in units. And essentially what that means is that, you know, someone can show up any time - day or night - and get a place to stay for the evening and then worry about registration the following day.” • “The big one is making sure that there's adequate shelter, for when people show up after hours for, like the drop in. That's a really big one. Because it just doesn't do any good when someone shows up, and it took, you know, it takes them a lot to get to the point where they come to ask for help, and then if they get turned away, it just can cause a lot of problems.”

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The implementation of the project was challenging in regards to staffing and some veterans had to resort to camping in the area”
<p>Discharged veterans struggle to find shelter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the implementation of an exit process • Create more low barrier housing opportunities for the chronically unhoused and mentally ill veterans • Investigate all discharges due to bad behavior, and try to minimize the amount of veterans released for internal policy violations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “If they're kicked out for a policy violation or anything like that, they'll just hold their property for up to 30 days. They're supposed to connect them to another housing location. Sometimes they don't do that well, they're not really good at following through on that. So that's something I want to see happen better.” • “Nobody wants to go work there, and if they get detailed there they consider it an awful detail. because it has had the reputation of just being really difficult and challenging. I think they can do better in terms of, you know, having people come right to them and do, like for example, legal clinics at the CTRS. So the veterans can ask the lawyers questions and get help with any legal issues. Just bring everything there and see if maybe, like you give them, you know a model that is more successful than others.” • “There's not like a formal appeal process, too, like it is just really arbitrary. And I'm like, “Ok, who's approving these discharges? And what if the veteran doesn't agree with it? And are you giving them a formal letter saying you are now discharged from this program?” But they don't have any rules on how long you can stay there, so there are some people who have been there since it opened, and it's a really long time to be there. so I don't know if they're going to start implementing things like that.”

Table 2: Participant Feedback on Effective Initiatives from CTRS

Key Perceived Successes	Participant Feedback	Supporting Narratives
<p>Low-barrier housing is needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many veterans suffer from mental health issues that result in repeated discharges from other programs • There are no other programs like this supported by the VA of Southern California 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It started as a tent camping project where veterans were given a tiny tent and allowed to camp on campus. and then it quickly became, you know, evident, I guess, that this was, you know, a preferred place for veterans to go, because it was low-barrier and there weren’t a lot of rules.” • “The program has scaled up significantly from serving a handful of residents to over 120 residents.” • “Stable housing can help veterans address medical and behavioral health issues and decrease their need for services. Getting veterans into low barrier housing is a big barrier and that low barrier housing can provide a foot in the door to accessing other services.” • “With the creation of CTRS VA was able to reduce impacts on the surrounding community. Before CTRS, there was a large homeless encampment along San Vicente Boulevard on the western boundary of VA West LA Campus, which severely impacted pedestrians, residents, and businesses by blocking the public right of way/sidewalk. The encampment was also a public health hazard, with concerns raised from residents and business owners in the area.”

<p>Tiny homes provide unique benefits when compared to other programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Most other programs utilize barracks-style housing, which can be retraumatizing ● Tiny homes are a good transition from streets to apartments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “I’m thankful again, because veterans can come in and get off the street and get their own privacy, you know. They’re much safer. And then, while they’re there, it’s a harm reduction program. So it’s a little more relaxed. It’s just getting them off the street, and I watch a lot of times where you have people that have pretty bad drug use when they’re on the street. Once you get them stable, you start watching the drug use go down, and see them wanting to start doing more. So while they’re at CTRS, they get connected with their social workers, and they work on a housing plan.” ● “The VA is cycling people through the tiny homes project to get them into a more permanent and supportive situation.” ● “The program has been successful in managing a low-barrier-to-entry program and serving different populations, but faces challenges in balancing future planning with creating infrastructure.” ● “The Care, Treatment, and Rehabilitative Services (CTRS) Program is one of several short-term emergency housing options available to homeless Veterans. VA’s goal is to offer at least one emergency housing option to every unsheltered homeless Veteran. Emergency housing is meant to provide safe, temporary housing while VA works with the Veteran to identify a
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		<p>permanent housing plan.</p> <p>Because CTRS is a low-barrier-to-entry program it caters to nearly all unhoused Veterans in the VAGLAHS service area. It considers their preferences for individual shelter units, as many are resistant to entering housing programs with congregate living settings. A low-barrier to entry ensures the program is as inclusive as possible, providing critical, life-saving resources to Veterans of all backgrounds, demographics, and abilities. Unhoused Veterans and their significant others are admitted, as are unhoused Veterans and their service animals.”</p>
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Quantitative Cost Analysis

Following persistence from the research team in attempting to obtain specific cost metrics and the annual operating budget for the CTRS tiny homes project, the research team was able to gain some of these quantitative costs. Ideally, the researchers had hoped to obtain further metrics in two categories, utilization and costs. Utilization metrics include how many occupants CTRS has, how many exits CTRS has (broken down by reason/destination), the average length of stay, average occupancy rate, and what services are provided during visits, as well as who provides those

services. Cost metrics include fixed costs (construction, gas, water, electricity, internet, insurance, etc.) and variable costs (food, services, ongoing operational costs such as operations and management, etc.). Future research is needed to obtain this data and further explore the actual effectiveness of CTRS.

Through conversations and interviews with stakeholders, the researchers obtained specific data on the costs and resources that contribute to operating CTRS. Stakeholders informed the research team that the Pallet Shelter model costs less than \$10,000 per unit. Depending on the construction team's familiarity with the process, one unit can be constructed in one to two hours. Many of these shelters have been donated, with the support of the operation of these shelters currently performed by VA staff. Additionally, CTRS stakeholders identified that staffing, security, custodial services, and other site support are the most expensive costs in operating the tiny homes community. CTRS has reported that as of January 2023, there have been 665 Veterans admitted to CTRS, with 80 veterans transitioning to permanent housing options and 40 being reunited with family following their stay in the THV. Each of these veterans' journey to permanent housing is tracked via Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS). The number of veterans utilizing the THV fluctuates, but for the most part, CTRS can serve 120 to 140 Veterans and their spouses or significant others at one time. Services provided at CTRS include meals, showers, security, peer support, and case management to work with and guide the Veterans toward permanent housing solutions. The VA also provides medical and mental health care to veterans who qualify. The VA and its community partners have also offered CTRS residents educational programs, job training, counseling, activities, recreational therapy, and many other offerings.

Currently, there are no plans to expand CTRS; however, staffing levels and community demand could allow the West LA VA to expand the THV in the future. Overall, some stakeholders identified CTRS as a shelter model that could be replicated at other VA facilities.

The researchers did also utilize a 2022 A-Mark Foundation report, which included an annual operating budget for a tiny homes community for people experiencing homelessness located on Chandler Boulevard in Los Angeles.⁶⁷ The Chandler Blvd THV opened in February 2021 and has 40 homes, totaling 75 beds.⁶⁸ The City of Los Angeles developed the THV, and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) covers the majority of the expenses of this project. The estimated total construction cost for the Chandler Blvd THV was \$4,933,700 and therefore, the estimated per-bed one-time construction cost was \$65,783. CTRS stakeholders reported the construction cost per bed to be lower than \$10,000.

This operating budget for the Chandler Blvd THV can be found in Table 3. This operating budget was extrapolated to estimate the costs per bed at CTRS. Some of the costs that the Chandler Blvd THV incurred in their annual budget likely differ from the costs and budget items of CTRS. With both communities being located in Los Angeles, it is reasonable to assume that costs such as construction, food, and utilities are consistent between the two facilities. Costs such as salaries for various employees are likely not the same between the two communities, as the communities do not share the same kinds of employees, and the employees working at CTRS are employed by the

⁶⁷ Tiny Home Villages: Construction and Operating Costs of Tiny Homes to Decrease Homelessness in Los Angeles. The A-Mark Foundation. (2022, March 2). Retrieved March 4, 2023, from <https://amarkfoundation.org/tiny-home-villages/>

⁶⁸ Chandler Blvd. Tiny Home Village. Hope The Mission. (2021, February 4). Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.hopeofthevalley.org/tinyhomes/chandler/>

VA in Los Angeles. CTRS operates with support from both the VA and various nonprofit organizations, so there may be some cost fluctuations there as well. Moreover, CTRS receives food donations from Brentwood School and UCLA, whereas the cost for food at the Chandler Blvd THV is borne by alternate sources of funding including from nonprofit organizations or purchased through organizational funding.

Table 4: Estimated annual operating cost for CTRS

Budget Item	Chandler Blvd Village Annualized Operating Costs	Annual Operating Cost Per Bed at Chandler Blvd (75 beds)	Estimated Annual Operating Cost Per Bed at CTRS (141 beds)
Program Manager	\$73,091	\$975	\$518
Case Manager/Housing Navigators (full-time)	\$152,251	\$2,030	\$1,080
Case Manager/Housing Navigators (part-time)	\$20,801	\$277	\$147
Client Service Monitor (full-time)	\$137,030	\$1,827	\$972
Client Service Monitor (part-time)	\$44,928	\$599	\$319
Hygiene Monitor	\$91,354	\$1,218	\$648
Janitor	\$45,677	\$609	\$324
Client Service Monitor FT 4 months	\$137,034	\$1,827	\$972
Driver	\$57,096	\$761	\$405
Director of Tiny Homes Villages	\$13,728	\$183	\$97

Sr. Director of Interim Housing	\$9,760	\$130	\$69
Security (security cameras and outsourced security officers)	\$288,000	\$3,840	\$2,042
Transportation	\$12,000	\$160	\$85
Food	\$131,040	\$1,747	\$929
Supplies, Hardware, Software	\$108,960	\$1,453	\$773
Utilities/Insurance	\$49,200	\$656	\$349
Internet	\$6,000	\$80	\$42
Office Trailer	\$4,800	\$64	\$34
Maintenance/Repair/Custodian	\$14,186	\$189	\$101
Furniture, Fixtures, Equipment	\$23,500	\$313	\$167
Indirect Cost Amount	\$135,000	\$1,800	\$957
Operating Costs TOTAL	\$1,555,436 annually	\$20,738 per night (\$20,738 total/365 days = \$56.80 per bed per night)	\$11,030 per night (\$11,030 total/365 days = \$30.22 per bed per night)

Table 3: Some of the data in this figure comes from a report published by the A-Mark Foundation in March 2022.⁶⁹ The estimated annual operating cost for the CTRS program was produced based on estimates from the service provider operating budget for Chandler Blvd found in the 2022 A-Mark Foundation report. The annual Operating Cost Per Bed at CTRS is just an estimate, as CTRS may or may not include some of these cost items and the amount for each of these costs may fluctuate outside of what the costs that the Chandler Blvd THV sees. (See *Appendix C* for a replica of the chart from the 2022 A-Mark Foundation report, which does not include the estimated CTRS tiny homes costs.)

⁶⁹ Tiny Home Villages: Construction and Operating Costs of Tiny Homes to Decrease Homelessness in Los Angeles. The A-Mark Foundation. (2022, March 2). Retrieved March 4, 2023, from <https://amarkfoundation.org/tiny-home-villages/>

Conclusion

The conclusions of this exploratory research project aim to answer questions for homeless service providers and other stakeholders about the efficacy of their programs and the value of their investments. This study found that the metrics with which to measure success are twofold: programmatic goals, determined by qualitative interview data, and cost-efficiency, determined by quantitative analysis. Regarding qualitative findings, study participants described challenges in terms of capacity, processes, and accessibility. Participants also proposed several recommendations for best addressing these issues, such as hiring more on-site staff, advertising the program to other unhoused veterans seeking shelter, extending and expanding the program, and improving program processes. Furthermore, study participants described perceived program successes, such as the unique benefits of the program and the need for low-barrier housing. Participants provided additional feedback that emphasized how many veterans suffer from mental health issues that result in repeated discharges from other programs, and that there are no other programs like this supported by the VA of Southern California. The interviewees also reported that most other programs utilize barracks-style housing, which can be retraumatizing, while tiny homes are a good option to help veterans transition from the streets to apartments. This indicates that key metrics of success include the tiny home village capacity, accessibility of services to program participants, and the existence of fair and supportive entry and exit processes.

Regarding quantitative findings, future research is needed to obtain more specific quantitative data to determine the effectiveness of CTRS. The CTRS program is funded by the VA, nonprofit organizations, and private donations and therefore makes program

costs difficult to ascertain. However, based on a 2022 report, published by the A-Mark Foundation, researchers found that Los Angeles had nine THVs totaling 1,217 beds. One of the key findings from this report was that across the nine THVs surveyed, the average construction cost per bed was \$42,344. This one-time construction cost per bed ranged from \$32,712 to \$65,783. The total includes costs associated with planning the community and tiny homes, the purchase and construction of tiny homes, and additional needed infrastructure, including office buildings, dining facilities, bathrooms, etc. This report identified that outside of construction and infrastructure costs, there are additional costs associated with running a tiny home community. These costs include the cost of food, special programming, management and oversight, utilities, and other various costs. The 2022 report did not outline these individual varying costs and instead, at the time, cited these costs as unclear. For the purposes of this current report and evaluating the effectiveness of the CTRS program for unhoused veterans in Los Angeles, the researchers were able to reasonably estimate these costs, as these specific costs were not able to be obtained by the researchers.

Quantitative metrics of success would ideally compare costs against positive outcomes for veterans, especially statistics regarding participant exits to permanent housing, which was not publicly available for this project. However, as this program expands under new leadership from the Veterans' Administration, there are increased opportunities to measure outcomes. Further, qualitative interview data indicates that the goals of this program are currently centered around reducing the number of veterans living on the streets, although transitioning participants into permanent housing is an end goal of providing interim housing to people experiencing homelessness. The stated

goals of the program are to improve healthcare outcomes while guiding unsheltered and homeless veterans toward permanent housing solutions.

Policy Implications

Future housing policy must consider that safe and secure housing is fundamental to a community's overall health.⁷⁰ As the population of Los Angeles continues to rise, there will continue to be a shortage of houses and apartments to live in — causing rent and mortgage prices to rise along with other costs of living. The inability of individuals to afford rental prices in Los Angeles will continue to contribute to the rising homeless crisis. Poor living conditions and insecure housing situations increase the risk of physical and mental health challenges that can have long-term impacts. As cities across Los Angeles face an ongoing affordable housing crisis, it is clear that policy should prioritize housing options that are safe, affordable, and practical.

Thus, expanding upon Los Angeles's current tiny homes model may come with many advantages. In theory, tiny homes pose a “unique option that can gently increase density in cities and meet the increasing calls for more affordable housing.”⁷¹ At the same time, tiny homes have the potential to improve ecological sustainability and help foster closer social relationships and human interactions, which benefits the wider community.”⁷² Furthermore, the tiny homes model emphasizes freedom of movement and provides homes with less costly maintenance and a safe space for residents to store belongings.

⁷⁰ National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. (N.d.). Social determinants of health. <http://nccdh.ca/glossary/entry/social-determinants-of-health>.

⁷¹ Keable, E. (2017). Building on the tiny house movement: A viable solution to meet affordable housing needs. *U. St. Thomas JL & Pub. Pol'y*, 11, 111.

⁷² Tiny house collective. (N.d.). Go tiny: A project on tiny houses. http://bctinyhousecollective.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Go-Tiny_A-project-on-tiny-houses_Final.pdf

This study's exploratory findings suggest that there are various considerations for cities considering implementing a similar program. Such considerations include the cost-efficiency of constructing and maintaining the tiny homes. Additional considerations are humaneness and privacy for the residents.⁷³ Furthermore, the need for additional services, including sustained case management teams to support quicker transitions to permanent housing. Lastly, the role that community outreach plays in fostering community integration. Other considerations include capacity, processes, and accessibility. Future policy creation will consider these strengths and implement housing programs that account for them.

Limitations

The researchers' findings represent the views of a convenience sample of individuals involved in implementing and maintaining the CTRS program. The interviews revealed similar themes suggesting that a similar data pattern may be obtained from similarly situated individuals. Additionally, the study was limited to six interviewees and may not represent the experiences and perceptions of other types of stakeholders within the community. Lastly, researchers could not obtain comprehensive funding and budgetary information from the VA and, therefore, could not conduct an accurate cost analysis of the CTRS program. Future research is needed to assess program efficacy and the value of the investment comprehensively. This future research should include the obtainment of specific metrics, including utilization data (how many occupants CTRS has; how many exits CTRS has, broken down by reason/destination; the average length of stay; the average occupancy rate; and what services are provided during visits, as well as who provides those services) and cost data (construction; gas; water;

⁷³ Ibid.

electricity; internet; insurance; food; services; ongoing operational costs, such as operations and management, etc.).

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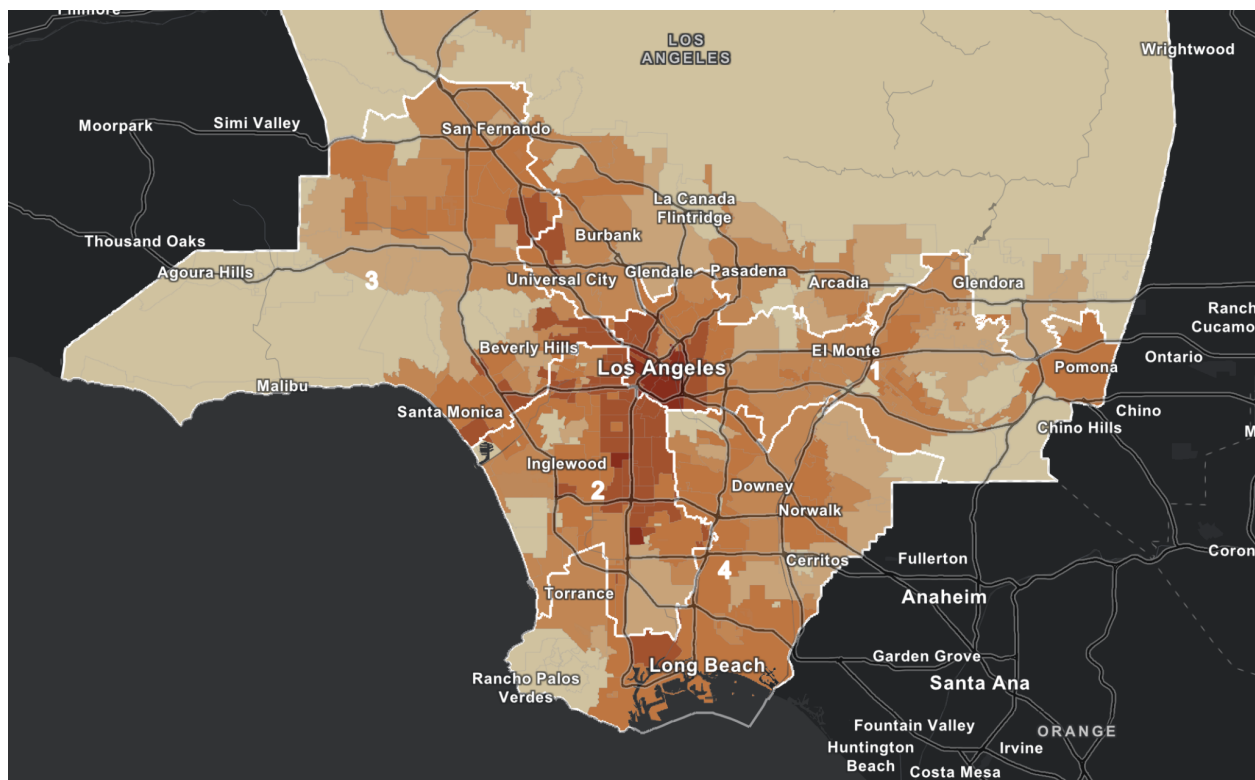
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Appendix A

Overall Homeless Population, 2022 Point In Time Count



Los Angeles County Homelessness & Housing Map, LA County⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Los Angeles County. (2023, January 11). *Los Angeles County Homelessness & Housing Map*. ArcGIS StoryMaps. Retrieved April 6, 2023, from <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/400d7b75f18747c4ae1ad22d662781a3>

Appendix B

Stakeholder Interview Questions

Program Administrator/Staff Questions:

1. Tell me about your role and your role in implementing this program.
2. How did you become involved with Village for Vets?
3. What are the goals of the program or the mission statement of the program?
4. What does success/fulfilling these goals look like to you?
5. What does success/fulfilling these goals look like to others in your organization?
6. How is the program funded and how did you go about finding said funders?
7. Do you have a plan for maintaining this funding into the future or will you need to find more funding in the future?
8. How many people are in the program at one time? Occupancy rates?
9. In your experience, how do folks hear about the tiny homes program? How do you all promote the program?
10. Does the organization partner with other organizations to recruit folks to live in tiny homes or for any other reasons?
11. How do individuals ultimately get into the program?
 - a. Is there a selection process or required criteria that an individual must meet in order to be accepted?
12. What percentage of applicants gets into the program?
13. What's the average length of stay in a tiny home?
14. Did you face any barriers as you aimed to get this program off the ground and as you continue to keep it going?
15. What does the exit process look like for someone who has lived in a tiny home?
 - a. Do you all keep track of where people are exiting to after they leave a tiny home?
 - b. Does your organization provide any follow-up support or resources to individuals following their stay in a tiny home?
16. How many tiny homes are available in the community?
17. Are all of the homes located in one area or are they spread out throughout the city?
18. How did you all decide on where the tiny homes should be located?
19. Is the organization planning on constructing any more tiny homes in the future? What is the construction process? Who is the construction team and how much does it cost to construct a tiny home?
20. How long does the turnover process take between one individual moving out of a tiny home and when another moves into the tiny home? What all goes into that process?

21. Are there restrictions on how long an individual can stay in a tiny home?
22. Are there any rules/restrictions while individuals are living in the tiny homes?
23. Are any other services provided to individuals living in the tiny homes? If so, what are those services?
24. What all is included in a tiny home?
25. What was the process of developing this program and getting it off the ground?
26. What are the major challenges you face in your role?
27. What are the major challenges the program faces?
28. Have you faced any challenges with implementation?
29. Did you face any barriers as you aimed to get this program off the ground and as you continue to keep it going?
30. How do you believe the program could be improved?
31. Are there any city ordinances that impact the tiny homes program?
32. Has it achieved the objectives that were set originally?
33. What has been the program coordinator's perception of the community's response to this program?
 - a. Did you all work with the community when planning the program?
34. Now that you've implemented the program, what has your experience been like?
35. Are you achieving what you expected from the program?
 - a. How do you measure those results?
36. Is the organization collecting any data on the program?
 - a. How do you go about collecting that data?
 - b. What elements are included in that data collection?
37. Does the program have goals for 5 years in the future? 10 years in the future?
 - a. How do you see this program evolving or expanding over time?
 - b. What will it take for that expansion/evolution to occur? (scalability of the program in the future)
38. What is the annual budget?
39. What are the program's biggest costs?
40. What do you see as best practices in operating the program?
41. What were some considerations in the predevelopment phase?
42. What are things you'd want to improve about the program?
43. What are some things that make this program unique from other THV?
44. Who are the major funders of THV?

Community Questions (neighborhood council):

1. What is your role in relation to Village for Vets?
2. Have you heard of Village for Vets before, if so how did you hear about it?
3. What has your interaction with the tiny homes project been, if any?

4. Were you, or any other community members that you know of, asked to provide input on the tiny homes project before the implementation of the program or during the implementation of the program?
5. As a member of the community, have you heard from community members about the tiny homes project, positive or negative? What has this response consisted of?

Funder Questions (individual funders and organization funders):

1. What organization are you from and what is your role at that organization?
2. How did you/your organization hear about the tiny homes project and their need for funding?
3. From your perspective, what are the program's greatest successes and what are its biggest shortcomings?
4. How much do you give to V4V?
5. Is your funding tied to any requirements or is it flexible?
6. How do you measure the success of the program?
7. What makes this program different from others that you could have alternatively provided funding to?
8. Were you involved in the development of V4V?

Appendix C

Budget Item	Chandler Blvd Village Annualized Operating Costs	Annual Operating Cost Per Bed at Chandler Blvd (75 beds)
Program Manager	\$73,091	\$975
Case Manager/Housing Navigators (full-time)	\$152,251	\$2,030
Case Manager/Housing Navigators (part-time)	\$20,801	\$277
Client Service Monitor (full-time)	\$137,030	\$1,827
Client Service Monitor (part-time)	\$44,928	\$599
Hygiene Monitor	\$91,354	\$1,218
Janitor	\$45,677	\$609
Client Service Monitor FT 4 months	\$137,034	\$1,827
Driver	\$57,096	\$761
Director of Tiny Homes Villages	\$13,728	\$183
Sr. Director of Interim Housing	\$9,760	\$130
Security (security cameras and outsourced security officers)	\$288,000	\$3,840
Transportation	\$12,000	\$160
Food	\$131,040	\$1,747
Supplies, Hardware, Software	\$108,960	\$1,453
Utilities/Insurance	\$49,200	\$656

Internet	\$6,000	\$80
Office Trailer	\$4,800	\$64
Maintenance/Repair/Custodian	\$14,186	\$189
Furniture, Fixtures, Equipment	\$23,500	\$313
Indirect Cost Amount	\$135,000	\$1,800
Operating Costs TOTAL	\$1,555,436 annually	\$20,738 per night (\$20,738 total/365 days = \$56.80 per bed per night)

Sample operating budget for Chandler Blvd Tiny Homes Village from a 2022 A-Mark Foundation report.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Tiny Home Villages: Construction and Operating Costs of Tiny Homes to Decrease Homelessness in Los Angeles. The A-Mark Foundation. (2022, March 2). Retrieved March 4, 2023, from <https://amarkfoundation.org/tiny-home-villages/>