



## STAFF REPORT

**Meeting Date:** March 1, 2016  
**To:** Honorable Mayor & City Council  
**From:** James R. Latta, LCSW  
**Subject:** 2016 Beverly Hills Homeless Count Results

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The 2016 Beverly Hills Homeless Count occurred on January 27<sup>th</sup> and was conducted in conjunction with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count. The County's count data is reported to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and influences the amount of federal funding directed to Los Angeles County. City of Beverly Hills' 2016 results show a 50% decrease from the year prior, with a reduction from 29 people found in 2015 to 14 people found in this year.

### **DISCUSSION**

Over 35 community volunteers, in partnership with the Beverly Hills Ambassador Team, Beverly Hills Police Department and the City's Changing Lives and Sharing Places (CLASP) homeless outreach team, participated in the City of Beverly Hills Count.

The community volunteers counted 14 homeless individuals and one make-shift shelter in Beverly Hills, which is more than a 50% decrease over last year when the count was at 29. The City has seen a reduction in homelessness since the count began in 2009, recording 42 homeless individuals that year. The Count took place every two years since then, this year it was made an annual event. In 2011, 37 homeless were counted and in 2013, it went down to 30.

To maintain consistency year-over-year and ensure the validity of the data collected, the Beverly Hills Count is conducted on the same night in January – the last Wednesday of the month, and starts at the same time, beginning at 8:00pm with standardized training materials provided by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority.

Holding these variables constant, the Human Services Division points to the implementation of the Beverly Hills Ambassador Team in July 2015, as the key difference in the City's homeless service strategy compared to prior years. The Ambassador Team provides services 7 days a week, 21 hours a day in the business triangle and on South Beverly Drive. The Team focuses on proactive hospitality and safety services, triaging incoming referrals from residents and businesses, and coordinates closely with the CLASP homeless outreach team.

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Referrals from the Ambassadors helps CLASP quickly link homeless individuals with the local and regional social services available to address their needs. With the Ambassadors consistent presence and extra boots on the ground, the City's Human Services Division and CLASP team have been able to focus on intensive case management to link vulnerable individuals to critical services needed to stabilize their lives – housing, medical, mental health, and government benefits.

Additionally of note, only one person was found in the City's 1.85 million square feet of parking structures during the 2016 Count. Before the Ambassador program began, the City had significant problems with people sheltering in City parking structures at night and making money by aggressively panhandling on City streets by day. Now the Ambassadors monitor the parking lots, removing door jams and reporting broken door handles to City staff so that the structures cannot be accessed after hours. Individuals found in the structures are educated about the City's social service resources, and if they consent, are quickly linked with Human Services CLASP program.

More than 6,000 total volunteers participated in the three-night effort to count homeless people in the Greater Los Angeles area.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

None to note.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Continue the City's homeless service strategy administered by the Human Services Division including: (1) the CLASP homeless outreach contract with Step Up on Second, (2) the Ambassador Team through Block by Block, and (3) retain key community partners supporting individuals from homelessness to permanent housing organized through the City's Community Assistance Grant Funding.

Steve Zoet  
Approved By

