



Community Services
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For Immediate Release
January 25, 2018
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Beverly Hills Completes 2018 Homeless Count

***Decrease in Homelessness Attributed to the Collaboration and Coordinated Efforts
Between City Staff and a Caring Community.***

Beverly Hills, CA – On Wednesday, January 24, over 60 community volunteers participated in the City's annual Homeless Count, held in conjunction with the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority's (LAHSA) countrywide effort to understand and address the complex issues of homelessness in Greater Los Angeles. The community volunteers, in partnership with the Beverly Hills Ambassador Team, Beverly Hills Police Department Bike Patrol Unit, and the City's Changing Lives and Sharing Places (CLASP) homeless outreach team, counted 15 homeless individuals, 1 car and 1 make-shift shelter in Beverly Hills. This number is lower than last year's count of 22 individuals. Until last year, the City has seen a reduction in homelessness since the count began in 2009, recording 42 homeless individuals that year. Initially, the Count took place every two years; it then became an annual event in 2015. In 2011, 37 homeless were counted; in 2013, it decreased to 30 homeless; it again decreased to 29 homeless in 2015; and down to 14 homeless in 2016.

Across the country, communities are experiencing a variety of challenges in addressing the issue of homelessness. Yesterday, members of the Beverly Hills' Chronic Homeless Assistance Team (CHAT) attended *The Police Response To Homelessness Conference* held by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) convened in Long Beach. Chiefs of Police from across the Nation discussed promising practices and explored innovative approaches to address homelessness in communities across the country. Whether it's the Hepatitis epidemic among the homeless population in San Diego or the devastating opioid crisis back East, the causes of homelessness are multifaceted and unique to each community.

Jim Latta Human Services Administrator for the City of Beverly Hills, "recommends that communities take the time to understand their homeless population, identify their specific service needs, find out where they come from and reach out the stakeholders in the community." Next, with this information and the support of local government, target the most vulnerable members of the communities and provide services that address their needs. The goal should not be resolving homelessness, it should be helping the most vulnerable members one at a time.

Beverly Hills Human Services attributes this year's decrease in Beverly Hills to the Chronic Homeless Assistance Team (CHAT). CHAT meets monthly to discuss individuals whose needs are not being met. CHAT members include the Fire and Police Department, The City Prosecutor

and Human Services. Human Services oversees the Ranger and Ambassador Teams who provide regular reports on transient activity in our parks, the city parking lots and the business district. This collaborative effort provides a clear picture on a daily basis and we know who is moving through the community, who allows for a coordinated effort to help those who need help and set limits with those individuals who are opportunists.

In addition to the 44 volunteers, there were 7 Beverly Hills Police Bike officers in the business triangle and Beverly Gardens Park, 10 Ambassadors checking all City parking garages, and four Human Services staff members managing the deployment site at City Hall, for a total of 60 individuals. In addition to twelve volunteer teams driving throughout the city, the BHPD bike patrol checked known areas where transient individuals camp at night. As expected, most of our homeless individuals were identified along major bus routes and were either sleeping or passing through the City on foot.

The Ambassador Team provides services seven days a week, 24 hours per day in the business triangle and on South Beverly Drive. The Ambassadors consistent presence and extra boots on the ground has allowed the City's Human Services Division and the CLASP team to focus on intensive case management, linking the City's most vulnerable individuals to critical services (housing, mental health, medical and government benefits) needed to stabilize their lives. This communication allows for staff to better understand who needs help and how. City staffers who are first responders need to know who to call and what homeless resources the City provides.

The Beverly Hills Homeless Count was part of the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, a three-night effort, which began on January 23. Count numbers are reported to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and influences federal funding directed to Los Angeles County.

You can be part of the solution to end homelessness by supporting the City's Community Partners that provide the social service safety net for Beverly Hills' most vulnerable community members. For more information, contact Jim Latta with the Human Services Division, 310-285-2535 or jlatta@beverlyhills.org.