

CLIMATE EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION OFFICE AND CHIEF HEAT OFFICER
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS, CITY OF LOS ANGELES

DATE: December 2, 2024

TO: The Honorable Members of the Energy and Environment Committee
c/o Eric Villanueva, Legislative Assistant
Office of the City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**SUBJECT: Climate Emergency Mobilization Office and Chief Heat Officer Report
Relative to Council File No. 23-1380: Cooling Centers / City Facilities /
Cohesive Cooling Strategy**

Background and Summary

In 2024, Los Angeles exceeded the number of extreme heat days compared to the previous year, alongside record breaking temperatures across the globe. Extreme heat is the most prominent climate hazard in the City of Los Angeles, and is noted in both the City's 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) Update¹ and the City's Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA)². Extreme Heat deaths and injuries are preventable, and pose a growing public health risk due to the increasing rates, duration, and intensity of heat waves. Only a few hours of respite from extreme heat in a cool area with hydration options can help prevent heat exhaustion and thus avoid heat-related illnesses, or even death. Visiting a public facility equipped for cooling during a heat wave can provide critical recovery from heat exhaustion and can help Angelenos without reliable access to cooling apparatus remain safe and avoid calling 911 or requiring ambulances and even hospitalization, which all can put a strain on City resources.

In order to address these issues, on April 3, 2024³, the City Council adopted the Energy and Environment Committee Report from Council File No. 23-1380⁴ (as amended on April 3, 2024 by Blumenfeld-Rodriguez, Motion 5A⁵) relative to increasing access to cooling facilities in the City. CEMO responded to partial instructions from this Motion on June 5, 2024⁶, with a proposal for an LAPL Pilot Program for select libraries to serve as enhanced cooling centers during regular hours of operations during heat waves, in addition to opening select locations outside of normal operating hours on Sundays. Messaging and outreach to inform the public and marginalized communities that public libraries serve as cooling centers was also a key feature.

CEMO had been meeting and coordinating with LAPL and received their support for the proposed pilot program. The Energy and Environment Committee approved this pilot proposal via Motion on June 14, 2024⁷. The City Council subsequently adopted the Energy and

¹ 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) Update. Emergency Management Department (EMD), City of Los Angeles. <https://emergency.lacity.gov/city-readiness/mitigating-local-hazards>.

² Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA). Department of City Planning (DCP), City of Los Angeles. October 2024. <https://planning.lacity.gov/plans-policies/environmental-justice#climate-equity>.

³ See CF 23-1380: Official Action of the Los Angeles City Council for additional background on this matter. April 3, 2024. https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2023/23-1380_CA.pdf.

⁴ See CF 23-1380: <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=23-1380>.

⁵ See CF 23-1380: Amending Motion 5A (Blumenfeld-Rodriguez) for additional background on this matter. April 3, 2024. https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2023/23-1380_misc_AM5A_BB_MR.pdf.

⁶ See CF 23-1380: Report from the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office for additional background on this matter. June 5, 2024. https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2023/23-1380_rpt_cemo_6-05-24.pdf.

⁷ See CF 23-1380: Report from the Energy and Environment Committee for additional background on this matter. June 14, 2024. https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2023/23-1380_rpt_ee_06-14-24.pdf.

Environment Committee's recommendations via Council Action on June 26, 2024⁸ approving the implementation of the LAPL Pilot Program, with further instructions related to tracking participation and attendance of the LAPL Pilot on Sundays during heat waves. CEMO was also directed by the City Council in this adopted motion to identify possible funding and location of a potential additional climate station or cooling center in Skid Row.

This report addresses the remainder of the original instructions from the April 3, 2024 City Council Action and the additional instructions from the June 26, 2024 City Council Action.

Recommendations for the LAPL Pilot Program for Heat Season 2025

After the conclusion of the 2024 LAPL pilot program for enhanced cooling services, the following are observations and recommendations from CEMO to continue, improve, and potentially expand the program beyond the five (5) initial pilot LAPL locations.

1. Budget and Staffing

- Consider adding at least three (3) more pilot library cooling centers (based on staffing availability) across the City for Heat Season 2025 to better evaluate data, for a total of eight (8) library sites. One partial heat season that includes only data from four (4) branch libraries is not enough data or time to create overall conclusions about full budgetary needs for libraries as cooling centers. *(One (1) of the five (5) original pilot libraries, San Pedro Regional Branch Library, was closed for retrofits mid-season, which limited data collection.)* If any pilot libraries are added, they should be selected from those that currently offer Sunday hours of operation, as LAPL staffing and budget capacity are limited.
- The Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) and the Office of the City Administrative Officer (CAO) should work closely with CEMO to report on a feasibility analysis for necessary staffing and funding resources to support a phased expansion of City Library-focused heat and climate resilience center network expansion. Ideally, this funding should not be carved from LAPL's current budget, but perhaps funded by philanthropic grants or State and Federal Grants. The Office of the CAO has not been able to identify additional funding thus far for these five (5) initial pilot libraries, and even if funding were available, LAPL staffing (and corresponding overtime rates) at the class codes required to open libraries outside of normal operational hours is currently limited to these five (5) libraries. The City's Homelessness Emergency Account (HEA) could be a helpful funding source for certain site locations that cater to People Experiencing Homelessness (PEH), as well as potentially seeking grant funding, philanthropic funding, and/or State/Federal funds.
- The supplemental staffing pool must be expanded beyond current LAPL staff both for sustainability and policy efficacy in order to support opening and closing additional libraries on Sundays beyond normal operational hours. At least one (1) LAPL staff member at a certain class code must always be on site to open and close a library on a day that it is not scheduled to be open, but supplemental staff supporting these emergency operations could vary.

⁸ See CF 23-1380: Official Action of the Los Angeles City Council for additional background on this matter. June 26, 2024. https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2023/23-1380_CA_2.pdf.

- CEMO recommends the City to consider expanded budget funding allocation for additional contract staff, such as Security Officers currently under contract with LAPL, or third-party providers, such as non-profits skilled in disaster staffing services, to fill the gap of supplemental staffing needed for holidays and Sundays during heat alerts. As mentioned prior, one (1) LAPL staff member of specific class code (Senior Librarian, Class Code 6153 or Librarian II, Class Code 8335) is required for security purposes to open and close each library site, however, additional (variable) supporting staff are necessary to coordinate the cooling center services, and should be budgeted and planned for accordingly.
- The City should also explore activation of Citywide Disaster Service Workers (DSW) from other Departments in the event of a local emergency related to extreme heat for better supplemental staffing coverage for multiple locations across the City on the same days, in order to better distribute the impact on resources Citywide, rather than just on LAPL staff, wherein staffing resources are currently limited.

2. Citywide LAPL Site Coordination

Citywide LAPL coordination is critical during a heat wave. During activation, the following recommendations apply to Citywide LAPL coordination and supply considerations:

- Add funding for critical supplies during heat waves with items that can best support emergency and resilience centers such as: water (hydration stations, existing at all LAPL sites), hydroflasks, hub device and phone chargers, first aid kits, personal protective equipment (PPE), etc. A draft supply budget was submitted in CEMO's June 5, 2024 LAPL Pilot Proposal⁹.
- Supplies can be coordinated through Central Library with Citywide deliveries weekly, as long as materials are delivered to Central before mid-day on Thursdays.

3. Outreach and Messaging of Libraries as Cooling Centers (and Warming Centers)

- Outreach messaging that libraries serve as cooling centers is needed as early as April of each year to ensure that libraries are considered more as a cooling option.
- Also provide messaging that libraries can serve as warming centers as early as October of each year and throughout the winter months.
- If LAPL will also be used for winter storms as warming centers, further additional budgeted funds are needed for staffing, contracts, and supplies.
- Availability of storage bins in advance of seeking shelter would be helpful for People Experiencing Homelessness (PEH), as most of their larger belongings are not allowed inside the libraries, as well as plastic bags on site, for limited items brought to library during winter storms that might already be wet.

Overall, the City must continue to provide more focused, language-appropriate outreach, and improved general public messaging, to ensure that more Angelenos consider libraries a place of refuge during heat waves. Difficult-to-reach, low-equity, high-heat risk constituencies can require

⁹ See CF 23-1380: Report from the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office for additional background on this matter. June 5, 2024.
https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2023/23-1380_rpt_cemo_6-05-24.pdf.

more custom approaches, such as trusted *promotoras* (community health educators) conducting door-to-door outreach services in the language(s) spoken by the community members.

4. Recommendation for program expansion to other City facilities

Recreation and Parks (RAP) facilities

- Recommend adding more RAP augmented cooling centers between June and mid-August in areas of high heat risk. There are approximately twenty (20) RAP facilities that have been certified, but only about five (5) are used during the heat season. RAP facilities include both recreation centers and senior centers.
- Additional RAP augmented cooling centers for Heat Season 2025 should include the following centers, which were used during Heat Season 2024:
 - Lincoln Heights Senior Center (CD 1)
 - Mid Valley Senior Center (CD 6)
 - Sunland Senior Center (CD 7)
 - Fred Roberts Recreation Center (CD 9)
 - Jim Gilliam Recreation Center (CD 10)
 - Lafayette Recreation Center (CD 10)
 - Jackie Tatum Harvard Recreation Center (CD 8)
 - Lake View Terrace Recreation Center (CD 7)
 - Green Meadows Recreation Center (CD 9)
 - Canoga Senior Center (CD 3)
 - Sylmar Recreation Center (CD 7)
- The City should also explore activation of Citywide Disaster Service Workers (DSW) in the event of a local emergency related to extreme heat for better supplemental staffing coverage for multiple locations across the City on the same day(s), in order to better distribute the impact on resources Citywide rather than just amongst RAP staff, wherein staffing resources are also currently limited.

5. LA 2028 Olympic Games and Major Events

As the City gets closer to the 2028 Olympics and other major events, it will need to assess costs of both RAP and LAPL facilities for extreme heat alerts, and also budget sufficient funds for additional related costs. Furthermore, for other major events in addition to the Olympics, RAP, LAPL, and other City facilities will need to be more equipped to prevent heat injury and mortality.

LAPL Pilot Background

In response to Council's partial instructions from the motion approved April 5, 2024, the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office (CEMO), with the support of the Emergency Management Department (EMD), and the Los Angeles Public Libraries (LAPL), proposed the [Library Pilot Program for Heat Season 2024 via a Report Back submitted June 5, 2024](#)¹⁰.

¹⁰ See CF 23-1380: CEMO LAPL Library report back for additional background on this matter. June 5, 2024. https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2023/23-1380_rpt_cemo_6-05-24.pdf.

Libraries are equipped with air conditioning, hydration stations, comfortable seating, bathrooms, are ADA-accessible, and currently serve the general public during their normal hours of operation for multiple social service purposes. Therefore, libraries comply with most facility requirements to serve as cooling centers during heat alerts and as warming centers during winter storms. The challenge has been that most Angelenos are not aware that they can use the City's libraries as cooling or warming centers, which was clear from focus groups conducted to inform CEMO's report [Turning Down The Heat: Addressing Heat Inequities of Frontline Communities in Los Angeles](#)¹¹, conducted with the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, Master of Public Policy (MPP) program. A second challenge is that LAPL sites are not not open on holidays and most are not open Sundays, with only ten (10) libraries open on Sundays from 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm, the eight (8) regional libraries, plus Central Library and Robertson Branch Library. The solution to the lack of access during heat waves would be to expand library operations and related services in the areas of greatest public health risk during heat waves.

Libraries in many cities have already begun to serve as critical resource centers during normal operational hours, support mobilization and educational programming, and have an additional public health role in extreme weather¹². With a growing number of extreme weather events and potentially life-threatening temperatures, libraries increasingly are functioning as cooling or warming centers to keep impacted individuals safe, and the pilot emphasized this functionality. Cities are offering libraries as cooling facilities, but it does take time to message this resource, and ensure that participant numbers during heat waves increase in the most vulnerable communities. Increasing messaging and operational hours are the first steps to address these issues, although it will likely require more than one Heat Season to provide data and improved outreach methods to increase use of libraries and other City facilities as cooling centers.

As mentioned above, the City Council approved CEMO's pilot proposal on June 26, 2024¹³. For the sake of urgency to address an imminent public health hazard, the pilot was launched for Heat Season 2024 a few weeks later. CEMO coordinated messaging, logistics, public relations, and outreach for the pilot, and met frequently with LAPL and EMD to design parameters, protocol, and means to measure excess visitors (and unique visitors for libraries only open for cooling services on Sundays) during heat waves for the selected pilot sites. CEMO also coordinated with LAPL to provide training on heat safety and cooling centers protocols, and offered multilingual heat safety outreach materials for distribution and display at each library.

Due to limited funding, CEMO's Pilot proposal only targeted three (3) regional libraries with existing Sunday hours and two (2) branch libraries to be opened for limited Sunday hours and services during heat alerts, with all five (5) libraries located in areas of relatively high heat risk (based on health factors in addition to average temperatures) and greatest demographic need, as per UCLA Heat Maps¹⁴, the Measure of Access, Disparity, and Equity (MADE) - the City's

¹¹ Abdelatty, H., English, D., Garcia, A., Melgoza, S. and Mendoza, A. (2023). Turning Down the Heat: Addressing Heat Inequities for Frontline Communities in Los Angeles. University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Luskin School of Public Affairs. <https://www.climate4la.org/Heat-Inequities-Report>.

¹² U.S. Public Libraries Serve as Cooling Centers in Extreme Weather. Library Journal. August 9, 2019. <https://www.libraryjournal.com/story/US-Public-Libraries-Serve-as-Cooling-Centers-in-Extreme-Weather>.

¹³ See CF 23-1380: Official Action of the Los Angeles City Council for additional background on this matter. June 26, 2024. https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2023/23-1380_CA_2.pdf.

¹⁴ UCLA Heat Maps. Center for Healthy Climate Solutions and Center for Public Health and Disasters. <https://uclaheatmaps.org>.

Equity Index and Tool¹⁵, and the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) CalEnviroScreen 4.0¹⁶. The libraries with enhanced services and/or expanded hours were activated under the same criteria as augmented cooling centers under the City's Emergency Operations Plan - [Adverse Weather Hazard Specific Annex](#)¹⁷, the National Weather Service (NWS)-issued Excessive Heat Warning¹⁸.

The goal was to track participation in enhanced services and access during heat waves to understand the benefits, challenges, and additional resources needed to continue and/or expand this response model to a primary climate hazard. This pilot program also sought to convey that all libraries could serve as a refuge from extreme heat through digital messaging via Citywide and CEMO's various social media platforms, especially under its "[Heat Relief 4 LA Campaign \(#HeatRelief4LA\)](#)"¹⁹, and a physical outreach engagement campaign supported by multiple community-based organizations (CBOs) and other City Departments.

Please review the initial CEMO report back on this topic submitted to Council June 5, 2024²⁰ (and cited in the reference section at the end of this report) for further breakdown of the library pilot program selection and methodology. The following libraries were prioritized for activation on Sundays from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm when an Excessive Heat Warning was issued by the National Weather Service and the City.

1. Chinatown Branch Library (CD 1)*
2. West Valley Regional Library (CD 3)
3. Exposition Park Regional Library (CD 8)
4. Pacoima Branch Library (CD 7)*
5. San Pedro Regional Library (CD 15)**

**Chinatown and Pacoima libraries were the two (2) non-regional branches selected to be open on Sundays when they would not have been normally open, with related staff overtime and security services requiring accountability and cost allocation in the draft budget development.*

***San Pedro Regional Library was closed for renovations starting the week of August 25, 2024 and remained closed for the remainder of the 2024 Heat Season. The tables included in Appendix A reflect the closure and the evaluation will take this into account through the analysis.*

¹⁵ Measure of Access, Disparity, and Equity (MADE) - The Los Angeles Equity Index and Tool. Office of the City Administrative Officer (CAO), City of Los Angeles. <https://lacity.shinyapps.io/MADE/>.

¹⁶ CalEnviroScreen 4.0: CA Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool. California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). October 2021. <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40>.

¹⁷ Adverse Weather Hazard Specific Annex. City of Los Angeles Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). November 2022. https://emergency.lacity.gov/sites/g/files/wph1791/files/2022-11/Adverse%20Weather%20Annex_%202022_MASTER%20FINAL%20.pdf.

¹⁸ Excessive Heat Warning. Heat Forecast Tools. National Weather Service (NWS). U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). <https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat-index>.

¹⁹ Heat Relief 4 LA Campaign (#HeatRelief4LA). Climate Emergency Mobilization Office (CEMO), Board of Public Works, City of Los Angeles. <https://www.climate4la.org/heat-relief-4-la/>.

²⁰ See CF 23-1380: Report from the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office for additional background on this matter. June 5, 2024. https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2023/23-1380_rpt_cemo_6-05-24.pdf.

There were five (5) Excessive Heat Warnings issued between July 2024 and October 2024 during the following date ranges, for a total of thirty-four (34) extreme heat days:

- July 3-11, 2024 (Nine (9) days)
- July 19-25, 2024 (Seven (7) days)
- August 4-6, 2024 (Three (3) days)
- September 3-10, 2024 (Eight (8) days)
- October 1-6, 2024 (Seven (7) days)

LAPL branches were activated as enhanced cooling centers with additional supplies and resources on twenty-five (25) dates beginning 7/19/2024, although Chinatown and Pacoima were opened for cooling services on Sundays for only two (2) of those dates (on 7/21/2024 and 9/8/2024), as the first heat wave presented logistical challenges to opening branches outside of normal operations, as overtime capacity and supply distribution was not yet established following recent adoption of the Motion.

Libraries as Cooling and Climate Resilience Centers (Messaging, Outreach, Social Media)

CEMO heat surveys, focus groups, and the report "[Turning Down The Heat: Addressing Heat Inequities of Frontline Communities in Los Angeles](#)"²¹ have previously conveyed that few marginalized communities in low-income areas consider libraries or public facilities as cooling centers. Consequently, part of this pilot involved messaging that libraries are available for all to serve as a place to cool down during heat waves. CEMO targeted locations in areas of greatest heat risk, but shared Citywide messaging on this subject to all via the #HeatRelief4LA social media campaign, in both English and Spanish. CEMO also encouraged libraries, CBOs, non-profits, and other City agencies to share this messaging. CEMO anticipates continuing to message this topic, since this was a short-duration pilot developed in the same month that it was approved by Council, just one month before heat season. Data messaging metrics are not yet available from 2024, but messaging as early as April of each year is recommended to ensure that libraries are considered more as a cooling option.

Use of LAPL and other City facilities beyond extreme heat needs

As mentioned in the Pilot Recommendations earlier, if LAPL and other City facilities will not only be used for extreme heat, but also for winter storms, wildfire events (such as outlined in CF 21-1277²²), or other climate emergencies and related hazards, budgetary and staffing solutions need to be addressed. Additionally, as the City gets closer to the 2028 Olympics and other major events, it will need to assess costs of RAP and LAPL facilities for extreme heat alerts, and also consider budgeting sufficient funds for additional related costs.

NGO, CBO, and Business Partnerships

To continue creating and improving partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and private businesses, the following strategies and approaches are recommended:

²¹ Abdelatty, H., English, D., Garcia, A., Melgoza, S. and Mendoza, A. (2023). Turning Down the Heat: Addressing Heat Inequities for Frontline Communities in Los Angeles. University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Luskin School of Public Affairs. <https://www.climate4la.org/Heat-Inequities-Report>.

²² See CF 21-1277. <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=21-1277>.

- Building and growing relationships, both in the context of a specific event or task-driven project, and continually in the community and via local collaborative partnerships
- Providing funding through targeted, relevant local outreach and stakeholder engagement opportunities
- Sharing information on collaborative grant opportunities for exploration, and partnering with other entities when appropriate
- Inviting NGOs, CBOs, and private sector partners to participate in planning and feedback initiatives in order to develop trust and gather insights
- Developing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with CBOs
- Additional insights gleaned from in-person [2024 Community Assembly Impact Report](#)²³

Potential Grants and Funding Sources

Some potential funding sources that could be pursued to support the development and maintenance of the City's cooling and resilience centers include the following resilience and infrastructure-focused grant opportunities:

Federal

1. [Environmental Justice Government-to-Government Program \(EJG2G\), United States Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#)²⁴
2. [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\) Round 3, United States Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#)²⁵
3. [Inflation Reduction Act \(IRA\) direct pay/funding options](#)²⁶

State²⁷

1. [Community Resilience Centers \(CRC\) Program \(Round 2 and subsequent\), California Strategic Growth Council \(SGC\)](#)²⁸
2. [Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program \(ICARP\) Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program \(EHCRP\) Implementation Grants \(Round 2 and subsequent\), California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation \(LCI\)](#)²⁹
3. [Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program \(ICARP\) Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grant Program \(RRGP\) \(Round 2 and subsequent\), California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation \(LCI\)](#)³⁰

²³ Community Assembly Impact Report (2024). Climate Emergency Mobilization Office, Board of Public Works, City of Los Angeles. <https://www.climate4la.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Impact-Report-CEMO-Climate-Equity-LA-Community-Assembly.pdf>.

²⁴ Environmental Justice Government-to-Government Program (EJG2G). United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-government-government-program>.

²⁵ Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). <https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/learn/building-resilient-infrastructure-communities>.

²⁶ A State Legislator's Guide to Direct Pay: Building Jobs & Sustainable Public Energy. Congressional Progressive Caucus Center. <https://www.progressivecaucuscenter.org/a-state-legislators-guide-to-direct-pay>.

²⁷ *How are California's New Climate Adaptation and Resilience Grant Programs Performing?*. Legal Planet. June 11, 2024. <https://legal-planet.org/2024/06/11/how-are-californias-new-climate-adaptation-and-resilience-grant-programs-performing/>.

²⁸ Community Resilience Centers (CRC) Program, CA Strategic Growth Council (SGC). <https://sgc.ca.gov/grant-programs/crc/>.

²⁹ Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP) Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (EHCRP) Implementation Grants (Round 2 and subsequent), California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI). <https://lci.ca.gov/climate/icarp/grants/extreme-heat-community-resilience.html>.

³⁰ Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP) Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grant Program (RRGP) (Round 2 and subsequent), California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI). <https://lci.ca.gov/climate/icarp/grants/regional-resilience-grant.html>.

Resources for People Experiencing Homelessness in Skid Row

Skid Row has the highest concentration of People Experiencing Homelessness (PEH)/unhoused, unsheltered people in the City³¹. According to the 2024 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count³², there are 3,791 people experiencing homelessness in Skid Row, and over 2,000 unsheltered and exposed to the elements. Skid Row is an urban heat island, experiencing higher temperatures than surrounding areas, due to the high concentration of concrete and pavement, and the lack of trees and shade. Residents often have no respite from the heat and little access to daily water for drinking and sanitation.

In 2024, the City funded one (1) permanent ReFresh Spot in Skid Row, located at 544 Towne Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90013, with Homeless Health Care Los Angeles (HHCLA) that operated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide services and resources to visitors and Skid Row residents. Additionally, three (3) mobile climate stations were permanently opened by July 19, 2024 to provide hydration, shade, and rest.

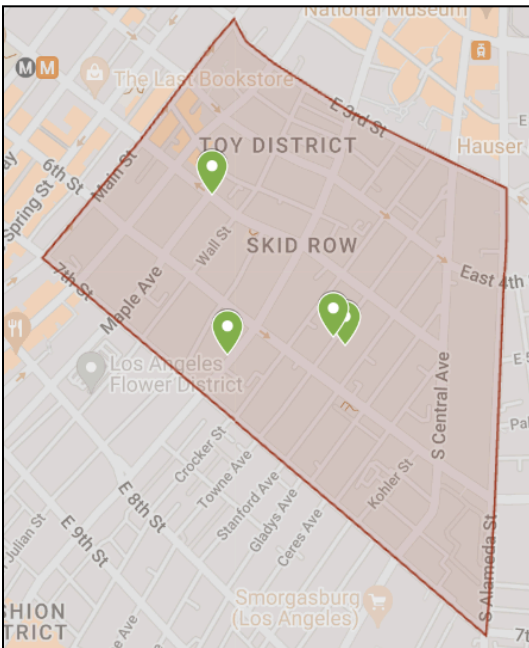


Figure 1. Mobile Climate Stations

- Towne Street (between 5th Street and 6th Street) across the street from the ReFresh Spot
- San Pedro Street mid-block between 6th Street and 7th Street
- 5th Street and Maple Avenue (*opened July 19, 2024, for 2024 Heat Season*)
- **ReFresh Spot on Towne Avenue across from the first Mobile Climate Station listed is also pinned on map*

Five (5) RAP centers and five (5) libraries served as enhanced cooling centers, with two (2) libraries open beyond regular operating hours; however, most were not in close walking/public transportation travel proximity to Skid Row. Chinatown Branch Library was the closest LAPL Pilot Library to Skid Row with expanded operational hours, but was a one-and-one-half (1.5) mile walk, and at least twenty (20) minutes on public transportation, requiring at least two (2) bus transfers. Little Tokyo Branch is the closest branch library to Skid Row, located about six-tenths (0.6) of a mile away or an approximately fifteen (15) minute walk, though this LAPL Branch is not open on Sundays.

³¹ Los Angeles County Shows Progress Housing Residents on Skid Row. Los Angeles County Health Services. <https://lacounty.gov/2024/08/12/os-angeles-county-shows-progress-housing-residents-on-skid-row/>.

³² 2024 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Data. Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). October 16, 2024. <https://www.lahsa.org/news?article=976-2024-greater-los-angeles-homeless-count-data>.

Existing ReFresh Spot and Mobile Climate Stations

- **Skid Row Community ReFresh Spot**³³
 - 544 Towne Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90013
 - Operated by HHCLA, open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
 - Restroom, shower, laundry facility with supplies (prevention kits, pet supplies, food and water, clothes, etc.), and supportive services
 - Includes 24/7 Safe Passage Program to create added safety for guests and visitors near and around the location
- **Mobile Climate Stations**
 - Three (3) total Mobile Climate stations were open at the start of Heat Season 2024
 - Towne St. (between 5th St. and 6th St.) across the street from the ReFresh Spot
 - San Pedro St., mid-block between 6th St. and 7th St.
 - 5th St. and Maple Ave.
 - Cold drinks, seating, and shade were provided at the stations

Hydration Stations/Public Toilets - Continue Financing and Maintenance

Public Toilets with Handwashing/Hydration Stations (StreetsLA)

The City's Bureau of Street Services (StreetsLA) currently operates public toilets and handwashing/bottle-filling hydration stations at six (6) locations in Skid Row:

1. 6th Street and Gladys Avenue (one (1) toilet stall; includes secondary, adjacent, free-standing handwashing/hydration station)
2. 5th Street and S Hill Street (SE corner of Pershing Square - two (2) toilet stalls)
3. San Pedro Street and 6th Street (in front of Union Rescue Mission - two (2) toilet stalls)
4. 5th Street and S Los Angeles Street (two (2) toilet stalls)
5. 5th Street and San Julian Street (one (1) toilet stall; includes secondary, adjacent, free-standing handwashing/hydration station)
6. 5th Street and San Pedro Street (two (2) toilet stalls)

These facilities will no longer have maintenance funding after December 31, 2024. Unless emergency funding (or another source of funding) is provided for maintenance of existing hydration stations and public toilets in Skid Row, these services will not be able to be maintained. Should funding be identified to continue these services, CEMO recommends the issuance of a competitive bidding process, such as a Request for Proposals (RFP), to procure services that provide the greatest value and efficiency to the City. These services may also be best administered by another City Department/Bureau that operates a similar program Citywide.

³³ Skid Row Community ReFresh Spot. Homeless Health Care Los Angeles (HHCLA). <https://www.hhcla.org/programs>.

Recommendations for Potential Skid Row Site Expansion

For recommending a site for potential expansion, several factors should be considered, such as:

- Need (availability or lack of resources, services, and/or other cooling sites in the surrounding area)
- Proximity to the unhoused community
- Existing relationships and trust - working with or supporting groups that have established working relationships and trust in the community
- Organizations that provide similar services
- Operating hours and ability to provide/house services (staff, infrastructure, electricity, air conditioning, restrooms, water, etc.)

As an additional Mobile Climate Station was opened for Heat Season 2024, and three (3) total were made available for 2024 Heat Season, this report does not recommend adding another Mobile Climate Station at this time, until further data is available on 2024 usage.

Conclusion

Excess deaths, hospitalizations, and injuries are rising as heat waves become more frequent and extreme. This pilot aims to align with public safety goals and identify additional funding to expand the Citywide heat/climate resilience and cooling center network with sustainable staffing, services, and supplies. The network would start with libraries, then expand to other public facilities (such as RAP facilities and FamilySource Centers) within targeted areas of greatest risk of heat injury and death in need of equitable investment, as identified by the City's Equity Index³⁴, UCLA Heat Maps³⁵, and CEMO's Cool Spots LA Map³⁶.

Ideally, investments should be similar to EMD's model with Emergency Duty Officers, including funding for supplies and activities for cooling center operations during heat waves along with related overtime for mandatory City staff (based on availability), additional City staff for support staffing, and/or supplemental non-City staff to help support Sundays and holiday openings not currently accounted for in these Departments' budgets. As mentioned earlier, an additional idea to explore might be the activation of Citywide Disaster Service Workers (DSW) in the event of a local emergency related to extreme heat for better supplemental staffing coverage for multiple locations across the City all on the same day, to better distribute the impact on resources.

For now, 24-hour shelters for heat waves are not yet as important as they might be for landslides, winter storms, and earthquakes, as only a few hours of cooling relief during the day are needed and there are typically further cooling opportunities in the evening. However, as seen in the 2024 Excessive Heat Warnings/heat waves, climate change is yielding higher temperatures and fewer cooling options in the evening, with some nights not providing as much cooling relief as in prior years. If trends continue, an increase in 24-hour extreme heat shelters may become a necessity, and further budget, staffing, and locations might need to be explored.

³⁴ Measure of Access, Disparity, and Equity (MADE) - The Los Angeles Equity Index and Tool. Office of the City Administrative Officer (CAO), City of Los Angeles. <https://lacity.shinyapps.io/MADE/>.

³⁵ UCLA Heat Maps. Center for Healthy Climate Solutions and Center for Public Health and Disasters. <https://uclaheatmaps.org>.

³⁶ Cool Spots LA Map. Climate Emergency Mobilization Office, Board of Public Works, City of Los Angeles. <https://www.climate4la.org/CoolSpotsLA>.

Sincerely,



MARTA A. SEGURA, MPH

Chief Heat Officer and Director,

Climate Emergency Mobilization Office (CEMO)

Board of Public Works

cc: Deputy Mayor Nancy Sutley, Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability
Deputy Mayor Randall Winston, Mayor's Office of City Infrastructure
Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Hamilton, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services
Deputy Mayor Brian Williams, Mayor's Office of Public Safety
Vahid Khorsand, President, Board of Public Works
General Manager John Szabo, Los Angeles Public Library
Susan Broman, Assistant City Librarian and Assistant General Manager, Los Angeles Public Library
Joyce Cooper, Division Librarian and Director of Branch Library Services, Los Angeles Public Library
TJ Knight, Acting Executive Officer, Board of Public Works
Raoul Mendoza, Assistant Director, Bureau of Contract Administration
Amy Clarke, Deputy Director of Operations, Climate Emergency Mobilization Office, Board of Public Works

MS\AC\CL\RGD

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Appendix A

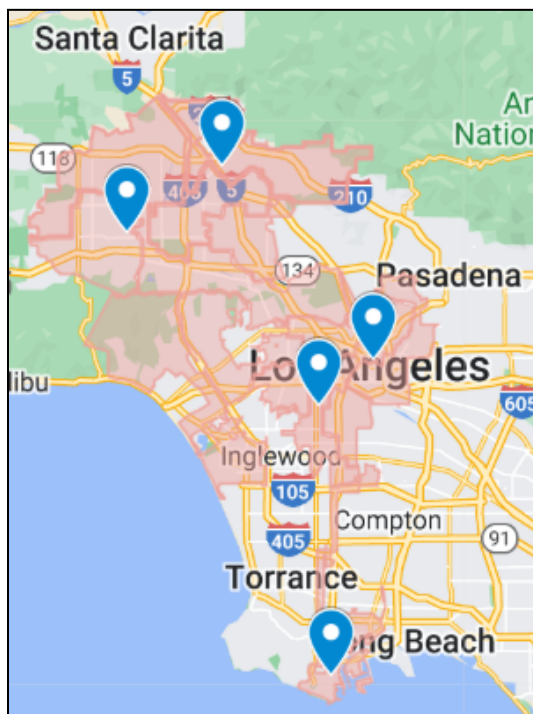


Figure 2. LAPL Pilot Locations

- West Valley Regional Library: 19036 Vanowen St, Reseda, CA 91335 (CD 3)
- Pacoima Branch Library: 13605 Van Nuys Blvd, Pacoima, CA 91331 (CD 7)
- Chinatown Branch Library: 639 N Hill St, Los Angeles, CA 90012 (CD 1)
- Exposition Park Regional Library: 3900 S Western Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90062 (CD 8)
- San Pedro Regional Library: 931 S Gaffey St, San Pedro, CA 90731 (CD 15)

Table 1. Sunday attendance

Location	7/21	7/28	8/4	8/11	8/18	8/25	9/1	9/8	9/15	9/22	9/29	10/6	Total
Exposition Park Regional	*	*	*	*	*	130	190	141	117	101	98	#	777
San Pedro Regional	182	118	117	72	136	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	625
West Valley Regional	217	158	199	172	161	156	158	164	137	189	199	165	2075
Chinatown Branch	25	**	**	**	**	**	**	22	**	**	**	**	47
Pacoima Branch	6	**	**	**	**	**	**	7	**	**	**	**	13
Total / Sunday	430	276	316	244	297	286	348	334	254	290	297	165	3537

* Expo Park door counter broken

** Pilot sites not activated due to lack of time for logistics planning

^ San Pedro Branch closed for retrofits and construction

No count done

Table 2. All 2024 Heat Season dates LAPL Pilot sites were activated for enhanced cooling

# LAPL Pilot Activated days	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Day of the Week	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	SUN	MON	TUE	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON
Location / Date	7/19	7/20	7/21	7/22	7/23	7/24	7/25	8/4	8/5	8/6	9/3	9/4	9/5	9/6	9/7	9/8	9/9	9/10	10/1	10/2	10/3	10/4	10/5	10/6	10/7
Exposition Park (Regional)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
San Pedro (Regional)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^
West Valley (Regional)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Chinatown Branch (Pilot)	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	**	X
Pacoima Branch (Pilot)	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	**	X

Note: While extreme heat dates started 7/3/2024 in Los Angeles, LAPL Pilot Activation did not start until 7/19/2024 due to initial logistics coordination.

X: LAPL Pilot Activation - Enhanced cooling services during normal operation hours

O: LAPL Pilot Activation - Opened outside of normal hours

** Pilot sites not activated

^ San Pedro Regional Branch closed (starting 8/25/2024)