

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA

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**ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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The Honorable Karen Bass  
Mayor, City of Los Angeles  
Room 303, City Hall

City Council  
c/o City Clerk  
Room 395, City Hall

Attention: Civil Rights, Equity, Immigration, Aging and Disability Committee

**TRANSMITTAL: REPORT BACK FROM THE ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AND THE YOUTH  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT IN RESPONSE TO COUNCIL  
MOTION REGARDING A MULTI-YEAR WORKPLAN TO SCALE UP  
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS TO TRANSITION INDIVIDUALS OUT  
OF HOMELESSNESS**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The General Manager of the Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD) respectfully requests that the City Council:

1. NOTE and FILE this report, as it is provided for informational purposes only and no Council action is necessary.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Approval of the recommendations of this report will not impact the General Fund.

## **BACKGROUND**

On June 18, 2023, the City Council instructed the EWDD to report back with a multi-year work plan to scale up employment programs, such as Los Angeles Regional Initiative for Social Enterprise (LA:RISE), that can help transition individuals out of homelessness. The EWDD was also instructed to coordinate with the Olivia E. Mitchell LA City Youth Council (OMYC) on program development. Since then, the EWDD has collaborated with the Youth Development Department (YDD) and solicited feedback directly from the Youth Council to inform the work plan. Henceforth, the EWDD details existing workforce

development strategies to assist individuals in transitioning out of homelessness, including a multi-year work plan.

### EWDD Strategies

All of EWDD's Strategic Initiatives outlined in the department's Annual Plan are designed to: a) highlight the need to address the economic inequities among high-barrier populations which include older adults, reentry, and individuals experiencing homelessness; and b) identify industry sectors that are instrumental in bridging equity gaps by paying higher wages and creating career ladders.

### EWDD's Strategic Initiative

Support Regional Efforts to Reduce Homelessness by Providing Pathways to Sustainable Employment, Training and Education, and Connecting Participants to Supportive Services is in direct support of Mayor Bass efforts to address homelessness in the City of Los Angeles (City). Specific service strategies are detailed below.

### **Employment Outcomes through the Los Angeles Regional Initiative for Social Enterprise and WorkSource Centers**

The LA:RISE is the City's marquee program for individuals experiencing homelessness. The program provides transitional jobs and career services to those with a history of homelessness, including formerly incarcerated individuals and disconnected youth. In partnership with the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) (a social enterprise philanthropy and advocacy group), the LA:RISE is a collaborative partnership that connects the City's WorkSource Center (WSC) system with Employment Social Enterprises (ESEs) to assist in moving participants into the workforce. A minimum of 70% of participants are co-enrolled with a WSC. Since inception of the pilot program in September 2015 through June 30, 2024, the LA:RISE placed 7,594 individuals into transitional subsidized jobs and placed 3,387 individuals into competitive, unsubsidized jobs. On average, LA:RISE serves 1,000 participants per program year.

The City's America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs), locally known as WSCs, are funded through the Department of Labor's (DOL) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Fund. WIOA is designed to strengthen and improve our nation's public workforce system and help get Americans, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment including individuals experiencing homelessness, into high-quality jobs and careers and help employers hire and retain skilled workers. During PY 23-24, the City's WSCem, consisting of 14 Centers and 2 portal offices, served a total of 1,751 individuals currently and/or formerly experiencing homelessness.

### **LA:RISE Youth Academy**

According to Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's (LAHSA) 2023 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, there are 2,786 transitional age youth experiencing homelessness within the City. In 2021, the City launched the LA:RISE Youth Academy which expanded transitional subsidized employment and housing resources specifically to individuals from 18 to 24 years of age experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness. Funded by the Homeless, Housing, and Prevention

Program (HHAP) state block grant, a total of 204 young adults were served from June 1, 2021 to May 31, 2023. The LA:RISE Youth Academy also received new funding through the California for All (CFA) grant to serve 500 individuals from 18 to 30 years of age over the course of a two-year period from July 1, 2022 through September 30, 2024.

As of June 30, 2024, a total of 581 homeless young adults have been served and, of these, 553 have been placed in paid work experience. A total of 104 participants have been placed in unsubsidized employment or certificated training programs (53% of goal met). This program year, 7 Social Enterprises or YouthSource (YSC) Transitional Employment Providers and 3 WSCs partners are collaborating to transition these individuals into permanent employment or into certificated training.

The LA:RISE Youth Academy contracted service providers have established partnerships with homeless service providers to leverage resources. It will expand its referral partners to include LAHSA, the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), LA County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), to create a streamlined process for connecting targeted youth to the program and supportive services.

### **Inside Safe Job Connector Initiative**

The creation of the Inside Safe Job Connector Program (Job Connectors) is in support of the Mayor's Inside Safe Initiative. The Job Connectors program will support the integration of the City's Workforce Development System (WDS) with Inside Safe housing initiatives and other critical systems of care. The program will fund a total of 8 Inside Safe Job Connectors across the WDS to assist up to three-hundred (300) recently housed individuals connect to a job or training through one of the city's WSC or YSC. The job connectors will be assigned to a specific region of the City at identified Inside Safe housing sites. To stabilize participants in the City's employment programs, Job Connectors will also assist with referrals for individuals participating in the city's employment programs to be considered for housing via the Inside Safe initiative.

In March 2023, the Workforce Development Board (WDB) approved \$250,000 to the Coalition for Responsible Community Development (CRCD) to pilot the Inside Safe program starting April 3, 2023 to serve the first one-hundred (100) individuals. In Year 1, CRCD hired four (4) job connectors stationed at the Los Angeles Grand Hotel. This Inside Safe site houses approximately three-hundred (300) individuals. Each Job Connector will work to support twenty-five (25) residents. As of July 10, 2024, CRCD has received two hundred thirty-two (232) referrals and sixty-four (64) active clients. Of these, twenty-five (25) have enrolled with a local WSC or YSC, two-hundred fourteen (214) job applications submitted for employment, sixty-two (62) have been assisted with job interviews, and thirty (30) have secured part-time or full-time employment.

An additional four (4) Job Connectors (8 Total) will be hired in Summer of 2024 through CRCD and will be stationed at multiple Inside Safe locations expanding regional access of the program and support. South Valley, Sun Valley, Hollywood, Boyle Heights and Vernon Central/LATTC WSCs have been identified as partners under this expansion based on proximity to identified Inside Safe locations served by Job Connectors. Additional WSC partners and service areas are forthcoming.

## **LA P3 Youth Strategic Plan – Horizons 32,000 Plan**

The Horizons 32K Strategic Plan, formerly called the Los Angeles Performance Partnership Pilot (P3) Strategic Plan, is a regional cross-sector collaboration that seeks to reduce the region's "Opportunity Youth" population, young adults who are out of school and out of work. It highlights current efforts to build a better system of care, and most importantly provides recommendations to our elected public bodies and to our philanthropic partners on action steps that would lower the disconnection rate and improve education, employment, housing and well-being services for Los Angeles disconnected youth. Horizon 32K will cover the period of 2024-2028. The Horizons 32K plan establishes four overarching goals, and aligned youth impact metrics, that together will drive our coalition's success in achieving 32,000 brighter horizons for Opportunity Youth. In its first year of implementation, Horizons 32K partners will prioritize required metrics, collect baseline data, and establish targets. The expected four-year impact is to reduce the number of young adults experiencing disconnection from school and work in LA County by 22% (32,000) by 2027. The overarching vision is that all Opportunity Youth in Los Angeles County (County) will reach their full potential by securing access and persistence toward quality education, training, and employment opportunities.

Horizons 32k Strategic Plan also serves as an outreach mechanism to disconnected and homeless youth to better access services. Through this collaboration, all of the City's 14 YSCs are required to convene with regional partners on a monthly basis to share available resources and opportunities for youth participants. Regional partners include LAUSD, Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), Opportunity Youth Collaborative (OYC), and various Community Based Organizations who also refer youth to available programming.

## **Peer-to-Peer Solution: City of LA Certified Peer Counselor Demonstration Project**

Over the past two decades, the youth mental health movement has recognized that additional, developmentally appropriate modalities must complement traditional medical model interventions. The Peer-to-Peer (P2P) model is an evidence-based approach to providing effective and efficient care that young people actually embrace. Peer support workers complement the roles of therapists and case managers by drawing on their own lived experiences to inspire hope, perseverance, and validation. They offer a level of acceptance, understanding, validation, and connectedness that can be hard to achieve in other professional relationships.

The City and its partner agencies in the County have recognized the potential role of P2P in their service array and have assembled resources to support the 2023-2024 pilot project implementation. In partnership with Public Works Alliance (PWA), West Coast Children's Clinic, LAUSD, and El Centro de Ayuda, the City will implement a Peer Mental Health Specialist Demonstration Project in fourteen Youth Opportunity Centers throughout the city. A total of 70 to 90 youth will be hired, trained, and paid a living wage to provide P2P mental health services to youth ages 18 to 24. P2P participants will complete 100 hours of paid training and deliver 200 hours of paid peer-to-peer, culturally relevant, mental health support to at least 280 youth participants at the City's 14 YSCs and/or partner sites. Successful completion of the 300 hours of work will lead to a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification by California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA). In PY 2024-25; former LA:RISE Youth Academy participants (ages 18-30 experiencing homelessness) will have priority for enrolling into the P2P program.

## **UPDATES**

### **EWDD 5-Year Strategic Plan**

To address the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic, the EWDD procured CivicMakers, a third-party consultant, to support the City's WDS in developing a comprehensive five-year strategic plan to promote economic recovery, financial stability, and prepare residents and businesses of Los Angeles for jobs of the future. To support the Plan's development and the work of CivicMakers, in September 2023, a twenty-member Five-Year Plan Ad Hoc Committee was established by the WDB. The City's WDB will begin implementing proposed initiatives of the City's Five-Year Workforce Development Strategic Plan during Program Year (PY) 2024-25. The proposed Plan, slated to be released by Summer 2024, will include the following deliverables:

- A concrete five-year strategy that supports the Mayor's goal to connect every Angeleno with a living-wage job and career pathways;
- Facilitated meetings with community stakeholders and business leaders to assess the critical need for highly-trained employees in today's workforce and address barriers to employment; and
- An in-depth analysis of government policies that may be hindering labor growth and wage increases; identify solutions and best practices for increasing employment and reducing labor shortages.

In addition, the EWDD is conducting other strategic planning efforts which include the Older Worker Strategy and Horizons 32K Opportunity Youth Collaborative (formerly known as P3) focused on disconnected youth and which will be incorporated in the development of the Five-Year Plan to address the needs of these vulnerable populations including programming to address the City's homeless crisis.

### **EWDD Workforce Development Board Youth Council**

The EWDD's WDB Youth Council Members develop portions of the local plan relating to youth by recommending and approving eligible providers of youth activities and conducting oversight of special programs. Members facilitate the collaboration for youth advocacy and increase youth job opportunities. The YDD is a participating member of the WDB Youth Council and their participation helps coordinate efforts between the two departments. As of Spring 2024, two members of the Olivia E. Mitchell Youth Council have been appointed as members WDB Youth Council to ensure that the voices of youth are incorporated into the overall work of the EWDD.

### **YDD Olivia E. Mitchell Youth Council - Capstone Policy Project**

OMYC members are required to participate in an onboarding project that provides them with an understanding on how policy and legislation is conceptualized and implemented within the structure of local government. Over the course of the OMYC cohort's 10-month term, youth council members track city council motions, select city council committees of interest, work in groups and team settings to research, familiarize and formulate a list of recommendations for the council committee they choose. OMYC members then present their recommendations and findings to City Council Legislative Deputies. This capstone policy project was completed in June 2024.

Key takeaways and recommendations from the Housing & Homelessness Youth Council Committee include the following:

- Address homelessness in Los Angeles schools;
- Establish rental assistance programs for young Angelenos;
- Expand service provider workforce programs to youth;
- Financial Literacy Programs: Learning how to budget and finding a house or apartment that fits in your budget plan and ways to save money;
- Those at risk of becoming homeless will have the contact of a counselor where they can help review their options;
- Ensure young Angelenos have the proper resources to navigate the system; and
- Youth need aid and assistance to avoid or prevent homelessness.

### **YDD Olivia E. Mitchell Youth Council - Youth Civic Leadership Academy**

The 2nd Annual Youth Civic Leadership Academy, held March in 2024, is a policy centric platform for youth leaders to provide recommendations on a myriad of policies and services that affect their ability to live a good quality life in pursuit of achieving upward mobility. The summit is led by the OMYC and regional youth leaders throughout the City and County. The Youth Council prioritized Youth Housing & Homelessness and Youth Employment as some of the most important and relevant topics.

Key takeaways and recommendations from the Youth Housing & Homelessness and Youth Employment workshops include the following recommendations:

- Youth homelessness is not a singular issue; it requires a nuanced understanding and a multifaceted approach to address effectively;
- Youth homelessness and housing insecurity often result from trauma experienced in foster care. Transition-age youth are especially affected and need housing and various wrap around support services, including financial aid for education, job security, and mental health assistance;
- Youth suggests that professionals working with homeless youth should have mental health field experience. They also recommend offering financial literacy and job placement support to better tackle the underlying causes of youth homelessness;
- Youth suggest a reassessment and redefinition of "youth homelessness" to establish a clear pathway for youth housing stability. They advocate for policies that redistribute resources to more equitable programs aimed at preventing homelessness; and
- There is a strong desire to increase the availability and accessibility of internships for young people.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are the EWDD's recommendations and proposed action to create a multi-year work plan to scale up employment programs such as LA:RISE that can help transition individuals out of homelessness.

### **Economic and Workforce Development Department**

#### Year 1 to Year 2 (PY 2024-25 - PY 2025-26)

- Infuse recommendations into the 5 Year Workforce Development Strategic Plan and Horizon 32K plan.
- Expand the LA:RISE Youth Academy – include additional YSCs as transitional employment providers starting PY 2024-25.
- Recommend HHAP Funding to launch a Housing Pilot Expansion for LA:RISE Youth Academy participants (contingent on funding in PY 2024-25) to provide a monthly housing stipend for LA:RISE Youth Academy participants. Under this recommendation, EWDD is estimating 200 participants will receive monthly housing stipends for up to 10 months. The proposed pilot will elevate the LA:RISE program's efforts in transitioning unhoused/homeless youth to stable housing and support the program goals of helping participants gain permanent employment and economic mobility/self-sufficiency.
- Expand Inside Safe Job Connector Program in PY 2024-25 (hiring additional job connectors and regional expansion of the program).
- Increase staffing capacity of EWDD to provide year-round technical assistance and training to service providers (such as working with vulnerable populations and second chance employers).
- Implement Policy Directive to establish 'Priority of Service' guidelines for WSCs and YSCs serving youth populations experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.
- In PY 2024-25; former LA:RISE Youth Academy participants (ages 18-30 experiencing homelessness) will have priority for enrolling into the P2P program.
- Comprehensive Outreach Strategy (EWDD and YDD comprehensive plan) and/or alignment with all City Departments.
- Strengthen the LA:RISE Employer Engagement Plan – marketing and education campaign (homeless tax credits and other incentives); Homeless Connect Days; City/County LA:RISE Quarterly Employment Fairs.
- Establish a LAUSD Homeless Services Partnership.
- Establish a Community College Homeless Services Partnership.
- Increase coordination with the Mayor's Homeless Outreach Team.

#### Year 3 to Year 5 (PY 2026-27 - PY 2029-30)

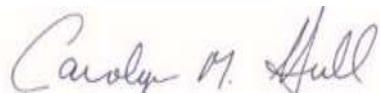
- Expand on the Horizons 32k (Formerly P3) Collaborative to create a Homeless Advocacy Regional Collaborative to link up all homeless service providers (mental health, housing, substance abuse treatment, education, training, employment, etc.).

- P2E 2.0 – incorporate Prisons outreach campaign (Amity Foundation, Friends Outside Los Angeles County, Career Pathways).
- Fund AJCC/WSCs to support workforce portal at Tiny Home Villages and at InsideSafe Shelters.
- Create partnership with Probation Department and Youth Transitional Housing/Camps.
- Bring back the Mayor's office Homeless Services Help Desk (or at portal sites) and create LA:RISE or other internship opportunities for education and outreach campaign.
- LAHSA/ County Regional Alignment with Homeless Initiatives – funding, partnerships and strategies.

### **NEXT STEPS / RECOMMENDATIONS**

In alignment with the EWDD's approved Annual Plan 25 and pending five (5) Year Workforce Development Strategy, EWDD will continue to prioritize the implementation of the workforce programs and related initiatives outlined in this transmittal, in cooperation with the Youth Council, as part of a multi-year work plan to scale up employment programs that can help transition individuals out of homelessness.

Additionally, EWDD is requesting assistance in accessing HHAP funds to launch a housing pilot program for LA:RISE Youth Academy enrolled individuals. The proposed pilot will elevate the LA:RISE program's efforts in transitioning unhoused/homeless youth to stable housing and support the program goals of helping participants gain permanent employment and economic mobility/self-sufficiency.



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