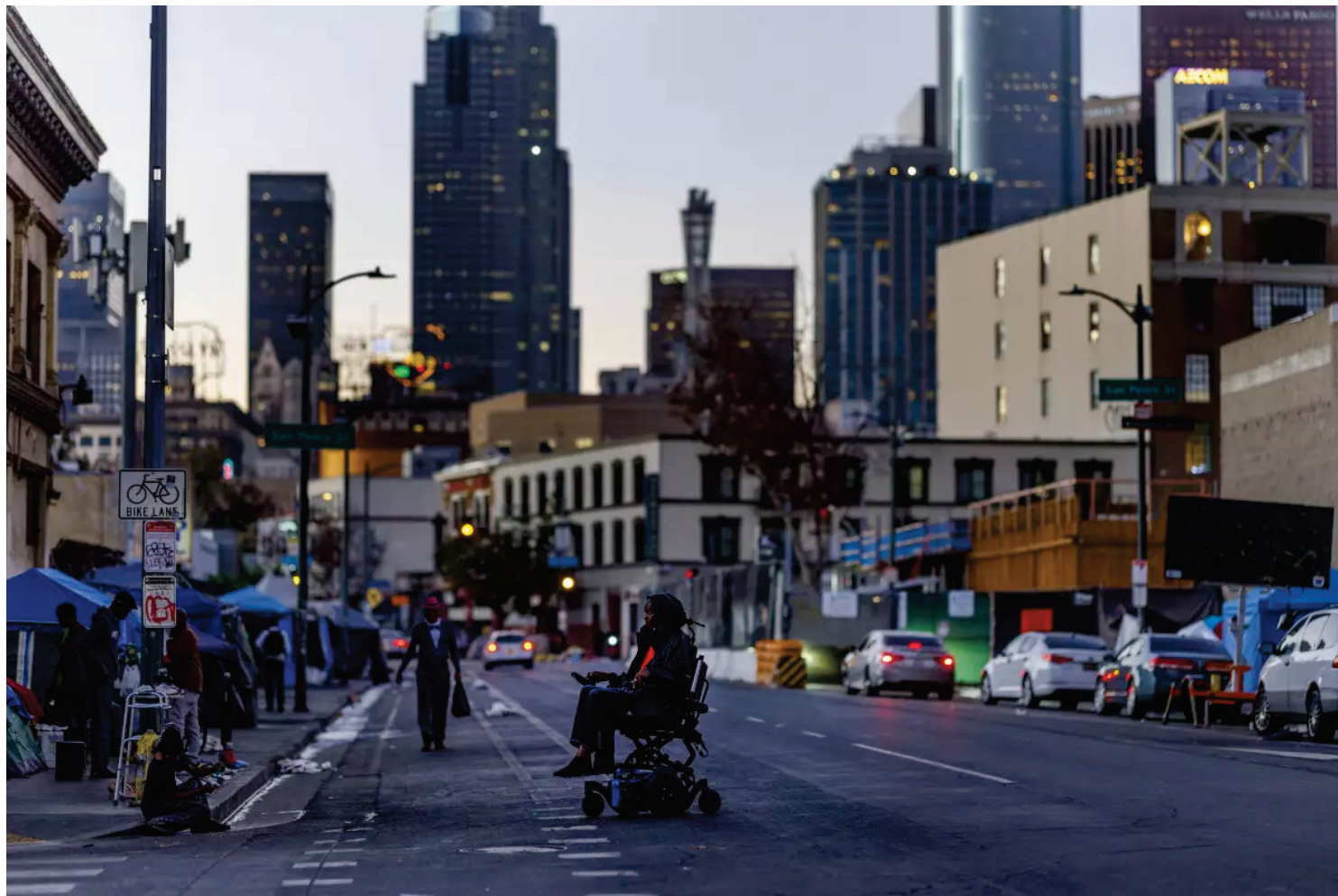


CALIFORNIA

More than \$11 million for homeless prevention coming to L.A. County



The Los Angeles County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency has approved nearly \$11.5 million in financial assistance to help keep at-risk renters off the street. Above, Skid Row in downtown Los Angeles. (Gina Ferazzi / Los Angeles Times)



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- Los Angeles County Affordable Housing Solutions has approved nearly \$11.5 million to fund direct financial assistance for at-risk renters, marking the agency's largest allocation since voters approved the anti-homelessness Measure A.
- Local officials warn state and federal budget cuts could push more than 14,500 formerly homeless people back onto streets and say the LACAHSAs dollars could help some stay housed.
- By the end of June, LACAHSAs expects to approve an additional \$75 million to help struggling renters.

The Los Angeles County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency on Wednesday approved nearly \$11.5 million in homeless prevention funds, the largest single allocation yet for the new agency.

The approval comes as other government entities cut back on some programs to fight homelessness, sparking concerns more people could make their way onto the streets and into shelters.

“We are in a place to deploy new dollars at a moment where dollars are scarce,” Long Beach Mayor Rex Richardson, who serves as chair of LACAHSAs board, said in an interview. “Help is on the way.”

In a unanimous vote, the LACAHSa board of directors signed off on more than \$7.6 million in direct rental subsidies and flexible [financial assistance](#) to people at risk of homelessness. An additional \$3.8 million in administrative funds was approved to run the effort.

Research has shown it is difficult to identify [who is actually at risk of becoming homeless](#), and it is impossible to know if someone who received homeless prevention help would have lost their housing without it, but there is evidence that financial support can help keep at least some people off the streets.

The money approved Wednesday comes from Measure A, the sales tax increase voters approved last year to tackle the homelessness crisis across the county.

A portion of those dollars goes to LACAHSa to build affordable housing and fund homeless prevention efforts such as rental subsidies. The county receives most of the remaining dollars to fund traditional homeless services such as outreach and shelters.

Despite Measure A's approval, the county is [planning to cut](#) some outreach programs next year, because Measure A is bringing in less revenue than expected as the economy slows and consumers spend less.

The state has also cut homeless funds to close budget gaps and there are looming federal cuts as well. In all, local officials have said the combination of state and expected federal cuts could force more than 14,500 formerly homeless households in L.A. County back onto the streets or into shelters next year.

Money from LACAHSa could keep some of those people housed.

The \$11.5 million approved Wednesday will be distributed to nine nonprofits and public agencies and is expected to help 700 households pay the rent over the next 18 months.

In several previous rounds, LACAHSa had approved a total of \$18.1 million in homeless prevention and renter protection programs, including eviction defense, and expects to sign off on another \$75 million by the end of June.

Some of the groups who will receive money from Wednesday's round include the nonprofits PATH, the Watts Labor Community Action Committee and the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights.

Richardson said distributing the money through multiple nonprofits with ties to different communities will help ensure "no group is left out" of assistance.