



Ballot Measure HHH

Homelessness Reduction and Prevention, Housing, and Facilities Bond

BY [BIANCA BARRAGAN](#) OCT 11, 2016, 11:31AM PDT



What's the proposal?

The proposal asks voters to approve a \$1.2-billion general obligation bond, basically a type of loan, to finance the construction of supportive and affordable housing for homeless people in the city of Los Angeles. Supportive housing refers to a type of housing that also includes on-site services, such as

case managers and physical and mental health care.

The bond would be paid for by property taxes. The cost has been estimated to be about \$9.64 a year for every \$100,000 in property owned, or about \$33 a year for the average homeowner for 29 years.

The city plans to use the money to help finance 10,000 units of permanent supportive housing over the next 10 years. The city will buy the land for the projects, lease it to developers long-term, and finance part of the building costs.

In addition to creating supportive housing, the bond money could also be used to pay for temporary shelters, showers, and other facilities for the homeless; affordable housing open to extremely low to low income renters; and to add infrastructure like sidewalks around the new housing.

Who's behind it?

The bond proposal was written by the leaders of the city council's Homelessness and Poverty Committee, Marqueece Harris-Dawson and José Huizar. The council [voted to put it on the ballot](#) in June.

The back story

The number of homeless people in Los Angeles is staggering. The [most recent homeless count](#) found more than 28,000 homeless people citywide, an 11 percent increase over the prior year. The most recent count's findings marked the fourth year in a row that the number of homeless people in the city rose.

Arguments for

- Without the funds from the bond, the city would only be able to finance about 3,000 units of permanent supportive housing over the next 10 years. With it, the city can finance 8,000 to 10,000 over the same period.
- The [Los Angeles Times editorial board](#), which supports a "yes" vote on the measure, says that HHH is a "critical" step in combating the city and county's serious homelessness problem. It notes that, "years of studies by academics and service providers" have shown that permanent supportive housing has a great retention rate among the homeless, meaning that it helps keep them in homes and off the streets.
- The *Times*'s notes one particular assurance that money will get used properly: "bonds would be issued only for approved projects, and no money would be borrowed until a project is approved and a developer has a service partner in hand."

"[Proposition HHH] won't clear the streets of homeless people within a few months or a couple of years. But without these housing projects, the problem cannot be solved. Let's stop pretending we don't see it." - *Los Angeles Times* editorial board

Arguments against

- With interest, the measure will ultimately cost taxpayers \$2 billion.
- New apartments won't show up for three years.
- Renters won't pay anything, only property owners
- The money from the bond can only be used for land and housing, but not homeless shelter funding or services like substance abuse treatment.

"[HHH] reflects a panicked rather than a reasonable response to the increase in homelessness in the city. It requires an unequal tax increase, and without county funding for services, it won't do enough to solve the roots of the problem." - Mark Ryavec, Jack Humphreville and Jay Handal in a *Los Angeles Times* op-ed