



LOS ANGELES

LOS ANGELES HOMELESSNESS

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Updated: LA county voters approve Measure H—here's how higher taxes will help the homeless

A lot more services and housing

BY ELIJAH CHILAND | MAR 8, 2017, 1:15PM PST



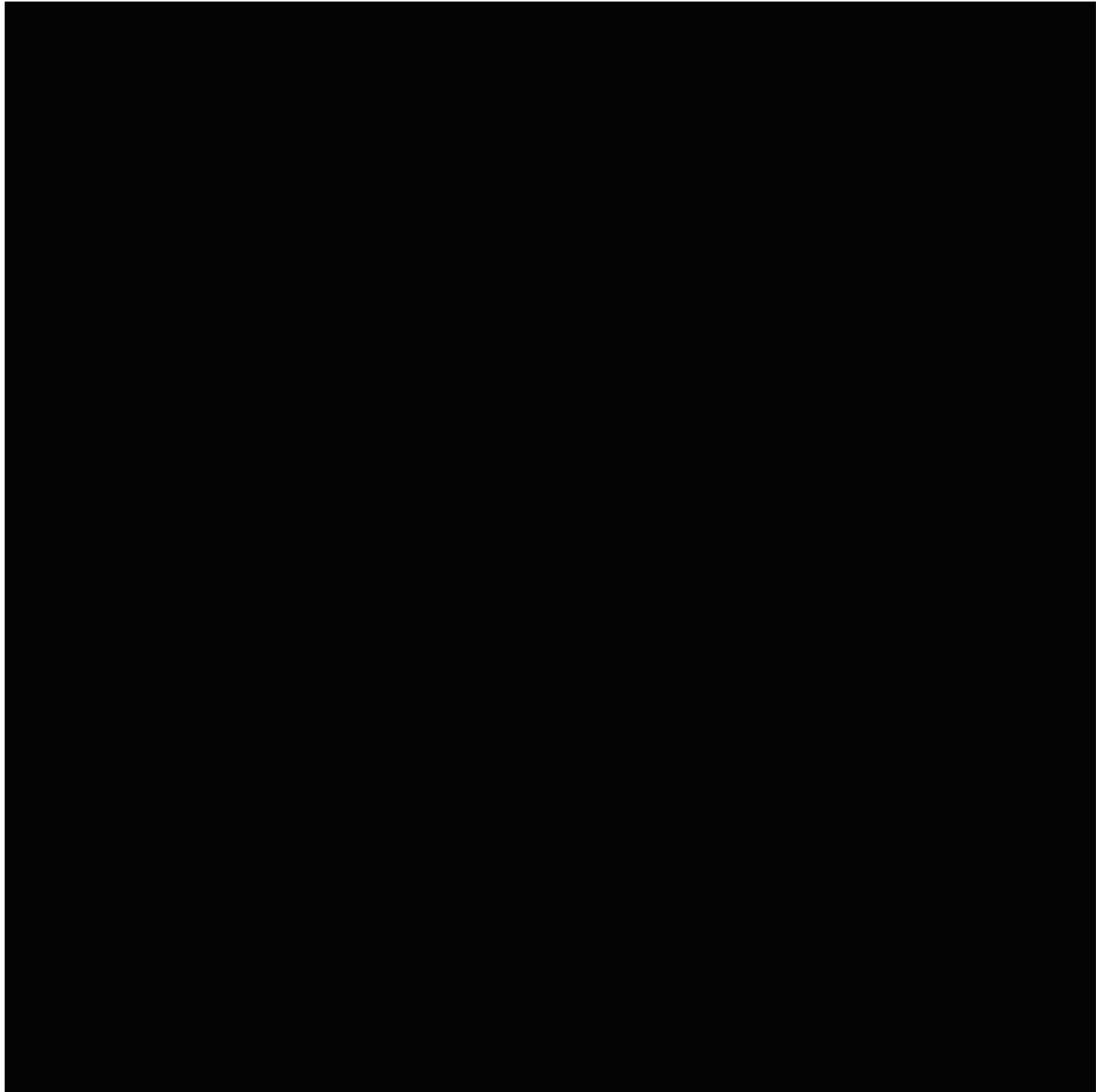
Photo by Kevork Djanszian/Getty Images

The results are in and it looks like Los Angeles County voters have narrowly approved a sales tax hike Tuesday that will help pay for homeless services. How exactly will that money be spent?

Well, in February of last year, the County Board of Supervisors approved a list of [47 strategies](#) for combatting homelessness, and 17 required additional funding. Measure H, which bumps the county's sales tax by a quarter-cent, will raise about \$355 million annually to implement those strategies.

Yes on Measure H Communications Director Tommy Newman tells Curbed that four “big ticket items” will likely get the lion’s share of the money raised through the sales tax increase. Those items are:

1. Outreach teams comprised of case workers and health specialists will be deployed throughout the region to address the immediate needs of homeless residents and eventually get them housed. Similar outreach programs already exist in Venice and [Skid Row](#). When we spent time with the Skid Row team in May, they provided first aid, helped people get identification cards, and coordinated with other agencies to find people housing.
2. Development of bridge housing, which Newman refers to as an “evolution of the shelter concept.” These facilities will house residents temporarily, providing in-house services to ensure they are ready to move on to permanent housing when they are able to do so. That’s important because securing rental assistance or housing can be a time-consuming process and homeless residents may need a safe place to stay in the meantime.



Skid Row outreach worker Sandy Martinez assists a man with a city-issued citation. The county plans to deploy outreach teams throughout the region. | [Elizabeth Daniels](#)

3. A rapid rehousing program in which the county partners with cities to provide temporary rental assistance to homeless residents moving back into housing and to families, older adults, and others at risk of falling into homelessness.

4. Providing supportive services like job training, substance abuse counseling, and mental health treatment to residents of permanent-supportive housing developments.

This element of the plan is especially important in light of the \$1.2 billion bond measure that voters in the city of Los Angeles passed in November. That measure will fund construction of 10,000 units of permanent-supportive housing specifically designed to house members of LA's chronically homeless population (those with disabling conditions that make it difficult to remain in housing). On-site service providers and case managers will be provided by the county.

The passage of Measure H means that plans to alleviate the homelessness crisis from both the city and county will have the funding they need to succeed. Now, the pressure will be on officials to make sure that happens.

Update 3/9: With nearly 300,000 ballots left to count, many Measure H supporters [aren't prepared to declare victory](#) quite yet. We should have a better idea of the ballot measure's fate by next week.

Update 3/19: On Friday, the Yes on H campaign officially declared victory with results now showing 69.24 percent support from LA County voters. The quarter-cent sales tax increase is expected to go into effect July 1.

- [Measure H: a voter guide for LA County's homelessness prevention ballot measure](#) [Curbed LA]
- [Measure HHH: Angelenos OK \\$1.2 billion bond to tackle homelessness](#) [Curbed LA]
- [Homelessness in LA Seems More Common Because It Is](#) [Curbed LA]
- [County supervisors will consider sales tax hike to pay for homeless services](#) [Curbed LA]

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