

# City Council Special Meeting Agenda



**JANUARY 10, 2019**

**2:00 p.m.**

**City of Turlock Yosemite Room**

**156 S. Broadway, Turlock, California**



Mayor  
**Amy Bublak**

Council Members  
**Gil Esquer**                      **Nicole Larson**  
**Andrew Nosrati**

City Manager  
**Robert C. Lawton**  
City Clerk  
**Jennifer Land**  
Interim City Attorney  
**Jose M. Sanchez**

**SPEAKER CARDS:** To accommodate those wishing to address the Council and allow for staff follow-up, speaker cards are available for any agenda item or any other topic delivered under Public Comment. Please fill out and provide the Comment Card to the City Clerk or Police Officer.

**NOTICE REGARDING NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS:** The Turlock City Council meetings are conducted in English and translation to other languages is not provided. Please make arrangements for an interpreter if necessary.

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**NOTICE:** Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54954.3, any member of the public may directly address the City Council on any item appearing on the agenda, including Consent Calendar and Public Hearing items, before or during the City Council's consideration of the item.

**AGENDA PACKETS:** Prior to the City Council meeting, a complete Agenda Packet is available for review on the City's website at [www.cityofturlock.org](http://www.cityofturlock.org) and in the City Clerk's Office at 156 S. Broadway, Suite 230, Turlock, during normal business hours. Materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the Council after distribution of the Agenda Packet are also available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office. Such documents may be available on the City's website subject to staff's ability to post the documents before the meeting.

1.    **A.    CALL TO ORDER**  
  
      **B.    SALUTE TO THE FLAG**
  
2.    **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – LIMITED TO ITEMS DESCRIBED IN THE NOTICE FOR THIS MEETING**  
      Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54954.3(a), this is the time set aside for citizens to address the City Council concerning any item that has been described in the notice for this meeting, including Consent Calendar items, before or during consideration of that item. You will be allowed five (5) minutes for your comments. If you wish to speak regarding an item on the agenda, you may be asked to defer your remarks until the Council addresses the matter.
  
3.    **DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND DISQUALIFICATIONS**

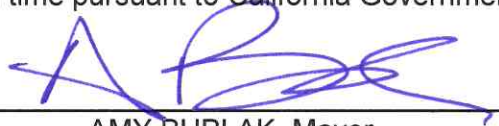
**4. WORKSHOP SESSION**

Review and discussion of strategies to address vagrancy and homelessness issues in Turlock.

- a) Opening Remarks by Mayor and City Manager
- b) Preliminary review of December 12, 2018 Workgroup suggestions:
  - a. Homelessness Prevention / Jobs, followed by discussion
  - b. Bathrooms and Businesses, followed by discussion
  - c. Community Engagement, followed by discussion
  - d. Housing, followed by discussion
- c) Recommendation by Council of items for City staff review and placement on subsequent Council agendas

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

The foregoing meeting is hereby called by Mayor Amy Bublak at the above mentioned date and time pursuant to California Government Code §54956.



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AMY BUBLAK, Mayor

# **City Council Briefing Memo**

**January 10, 2019**



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To: Mayor and Councilmembers

From: Maryn Pitt, Assistant to the City Manager for Housing and Economic Development

CC: Robert Lawton, City Manager  
Jose Sanchez, Interim City Attorney

Subject: Follow up on Items from Breakout Sessions

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This purpose of this memo is to provide follow up and supplemental information from the Special Council meeting held on Wednesday, December 12, 2018. The memo is not intended to be the complete answer to all of these suggestions – rather that it is intended to more fully inform the conversation about potential strategies and approaches to mitigating and reducing the number of people who experience homelessness.

The four breakout sessions held discussion and identified several topics or solutions that should be further explored. They prioritized the top three or four of their ideas for further exploration and feedback. Below is follow up and feedback information on the items that were suggested in each of the breakout sessions.

Staff is available to answer questions or provide more detailed information about the items or others that may arise.

## **HOMELESS PREVENTION/JOBS**

### **Mental Health/ Health**

Legacy Health Endowment is working to bring additional mental health resources that will be associated with nonprofit providers for a percentage of their time. In addition, BHRS has a permanent office here in Turlock located inside the Stanislaus South County Service Center on Soderquist.

On July 1, 2016, Governor Brown signed landmark legislation enacting the “No Place Like Home” program to dedicate up to \$2 billion in bond proceeds to invest in the development of permanent supportive housing for persons who are in need of mental health services and are experiencing homelessness, chronic homelessness, or who are at risk of chronic homelessness. The bonds are repaid by funding from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).

Key features of the program include:

- Counties will be eligible applicants (either solely or with a housing development sponsor).
- Funding for permanent supportive housing must utilize low barrier tenant selection practices that prioritize vulnerable populations and offer flexible, voluntary, and individualized supportive services.
- Counties must commit to provide mental health services and help coordinate access to other community-based supportive services.

The No Place Like Home funds are intended to be used to acquire, design, construct, rehabilitate, or preserve permanent supportive housing for persons who are experiencing homelessness, chronic homelessness or who are at risk of chronic homelessness, and who are in need of mental health services.

Stanislaus County is eligible to receive almost \$8 million of these funds. The City of Turlock Housing Program is working with the Stanislaus County Housing Authority and Behavioral Health in the development of a scattered site project for Turlock that would add 12 units of permanent supportive housing which would specifically serve individuals/families who are experiencing mental health issues.

#### **Low Barrier Jobs incentivized by the City.**

This idea will need more study to determine possible collaborations and efforts. A lower barrier job program is an element of the Downtown Streets Team effort as well as other homeless work program and all of them are worth further inquiry and assessment.

#### **Apprenticeship Access**

Staff has reached out to the Stanislaus County workforce alliance to inquire how a program like this one would work. One of the challenges is that the individual participants have to be drug/alcohol free and many of the programs require random testing (for safety reasons). Since approximately 40-50% of the current homeless population struggles with addiction,

#### **Resource Center**

**Turlock Gospel Mission** operates the only Day Center in Stanislaus County, this center provides a safe place for those in need to connect with critical services.

The Turlock Gospel Mission Day Center is open Monday through Friday 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM. After 5:30 PM all guests must be checked in and dinner is served at 6:00 PM.

Day Services include:

1. Clothing & Hygiene
2. Cooling and Warming Shelter
3. Meal Services
4. Case Management
5. Community Service and Diversion Services Opportunities
6. Assistance with pet food and veterinarian services

7. Provides a safe environment during the day...a positive alternative to the parks.

**WeCare** also provides case management services and assistance with identification, accessing benefits as well as manages transitional housing units.

## **BATHROOMS AND BUSINESS**

### **Port-a-Loo like in Portland Oregon**

From the Portland Loo website, "When Portland City Commissioner Randy Leonard originally had the idea for The Loo, there was a rise in the city's homeless population. Without restroom facilities, this population was left to find somewhere else to take care of business. The city realized that having a restroom open 24 hours a day with full public access would alleviate the need to disturb local businesses for their restroom facilities. They knew the solution would also help with sanitation, to prevent waste throughout public and tourist areas, as well as the spread of disease.



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Madden Fabrication took wish lists from a variety of Portland staff and volunteers, and together they created a public toilet that would prevent common problems - such as vandalism, illegal drug use or prostitution. The Portland Loo is easy to clean, and nothing can be ripped off the walls or easily damaged. It's made with components that are commonly used by many cities, making them easy to replace or upgrade. And because it's a single stall, it's gender neutral and can still take about 300 flushes per day, comparable to an airport restroom.

There's no other lavatory that is designed and built for the people that maintain it, which has proved to keep a city clean and crime-free. The first Portland Loo was installed over 10 years ago, and it still looks almost brand new! It won't be a risk to your budget or reputation either. If you need a durable and inexpensive solution to reducing crime and waste in your parks, transit stations, or other populated areas, join the many cities who enjoy the look of The Portland Loo.

Staff has inquired as to cost estimates for such facilities.

Update: Portland no longer allows 24 hour access to these bathroom facilities due to vandalism. However, they are opened for extended number of hours 365 day per year.

Update: Information has been received with some general cost estimates at between \$80,000-\$90,000 per bathroom based on information provided from the "Port-a-Loo website inquiry.

**Washer and Dryer stations and Shower Shuttle**

United Samaritans Foundation offers drop-in breakfast center, laundry and shower facilities, and the use of a phone number and address to aid in connectivity and job searches at their facility on South Broadway. The facilities and access to showers is open daily. For guests in either of the shelters, showers facilities are available and accessible.

**Information for Business Owners**

Resource directory is available on the City's website:

<https://ci.turlock.ca.us/housingprograms/communityresources/>

**Downtown Street Team**

Downtown Streets Team is a volunteer work-experience program. In exchange for beautifying your community, you receive gift cards to help with your basic needs and access to employment and case management services that support you in achieving your goals.

The program provides homeless and low-income men and women with the resources they need to rebuild their lives. First, they volunteer on one of the DST teams and begin working collaboratively on beautification projects. Team Members are held accountable and trusted to complete tasks, show up on time, and work well with others. Those who show dedication and leadership skills have the ability to rise up to become Team Leads, then Managers, and supervise others with little or no supervision from staff.

In return, Team Members receive a non-cash stipend to help cover their basic needs, while taking advantage of our case management and employment services to find housing and a job. The ultimate goal is to transition Team Members into employment because having a job restores hope and opens the door to other opportunities. The DST model is structured to be a one-year transitional program into permanent housing and employment.

The program is based in the Bay area and has expanded to the Sacramento area. They have entered into an agreement to expand to Modesto and are estimated to launch the program in February 2019. A proposal for expand to Turlock is pending, based on securing funding.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**Common Data Base (Homeless Access Center)**

The CSOC, along with input from the county-wide initiative Focus on Prevention, developed four core strategies that guide practice and form the basis of this updated plan. Each core strategy was shaped with input and data from past and current plans and reports relating to experiences of homelessness.

The Focus on Prevention four core strategies:

1. Outreach and Engagement: Improving community-based outreach and engagement strategies with a focus on identifying individuals who are not currently connected to services, and as trust is established, those individuals are introduced and connected to a variety of health, housing and community services and supports.
2. Coordinated Access: Developing a countywide coordinated access system that integrates all public- and community-based services and community supports.
3. Housing: Improving access to temporary, transitional, and permanent supportive housing
4. Supportive Services: Increasing the availability, effectiveness and alignments of homelessness services and community supports that help people escape from and stay out of homelessness

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a class of database applications used to confidentially aggregate data on homeless populations served in the United States. The HMIS system for Stanislaus County is run by the City of Modesto. The HMIS records and stores client-level information on the characteristics and service needs of homeless persons. All service providers enter client data to coordinate care, manage their operations, and better serve their clients.

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other planners and policymakers at the federal, state and local levels use aggregate HMIS data to obtain better information about the extent and nature of homelessness over time. Specifically, an HMIS can be used to produce an unduplicated count of homeless persons, understand patterns of service use, and measure the effectiveness of homeless programs.

HMIS data also serves to provide outcome-based data that facilitate timely, efficient, and effective access to needed services and supports for persons who are homeless. For instance, percentage of individuals who are in permanent housing at the time they exit a program is a metric used for evaluation. Other data fields focus on developing a picture of unduplicated counts, use of specific services and the effectiveness of the local homeless assistance systems.

### **Public Education (pan handling)**

According to data collected in the annual point in time count, most homeless individuals do not pan handle. Pan handlers are usually funding an addiction of some kind. Most are not homeless.

There has previously been attempt to initiate an awareness and public education campaign about pan handling. Other jurisdictions, such as San Luis Obispo have developed successful programs to aid in this effort.

Specifically, San Luis Obispo has a program called "Make Change Count". The objective of this initiative is to reduce panhandling throughout the City of San Luis Obispo through implementation of a program that provides an opportunity for the general public to donate and help the homeless in a positive way. The program helps ensure donations are used productively for homeless services rather than enabling behaviors that are destructive to both the individual and the community. Recycled parking meters are repurposed as donation meters throughout the downtown. The City of San Luis Obispo's Make Change Count program was launched in April of 2014. Funds are collected and provided to United Way to be awarded to programs that provide services, etc.

**Coordination among providers**

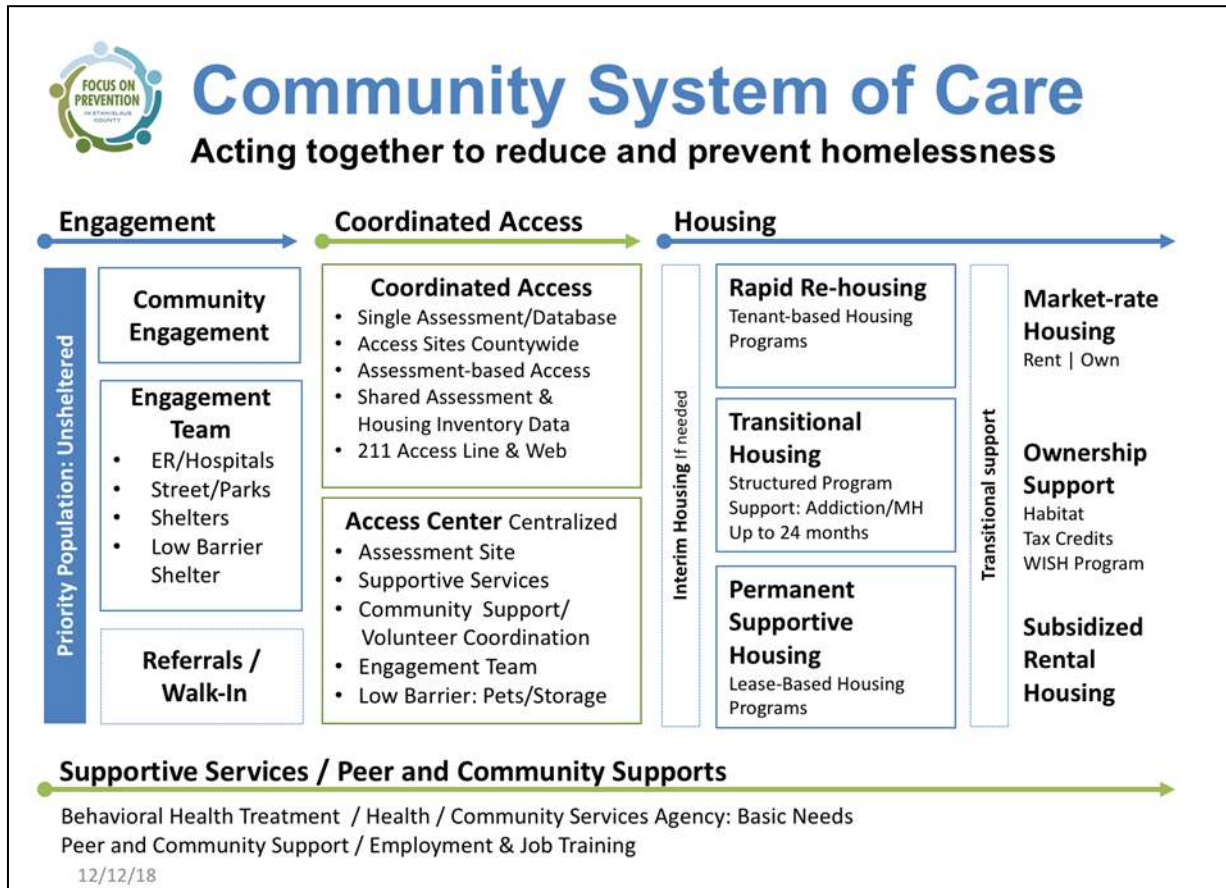
There is coordination among providers, but that alignment and coordination is a work in progress. Providers also participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) that tracks individuals and services provided. HMIS data also enhances data collected through the Point in Time Count.

Turlock has the Turlock Community Collaborative in which Serve providers share information that assists in case management as to services that are available.

Through the Focus on Prevention effort, the following system of care was developed. Currently, the engagement portion has been built, some of the coordinated access has been completed and efforts are being made to tie together current efforts in building out the housing portion of the process. The housing portion is hampered by a lack of existing housing stock. Turlock has a 2% vacancy rate in the housing rental market.

(see next page)





**Physical Place for needs to be Met**

See the sections regarding resource and access centers

**HOUSING**

**Immediate Housing to include Fairgrounds, Empty warehouses/Lots, Salvation Army, Large Tent with enough room for 49-98 individuals, Parks**

All of these options have merit and would need further investigation and due diligence that is site specific in order to assess their viability and address life safety issues and concerns.

**Transitional Housing**

HUD defines transitional housing as a project that has as its purpose facilitating the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing within a reasonable amount of time (usually 24 months). Transitional housing includes housing primarily designed to serve deinstitutionalized homeless individuals and other homeless individuals with mental or physical disabilities and homeless families with children. HUD provides funding for transitional housing programs designed to end or prevent homelessness. The mission is to help the homeless by placing them in stable housing. In addition to providing

temporary housing, HUD transitional housing programs focus on helping people gain the ability to become financially independent. Participants have a place to call home as they transition to self-sufficiency.

Currently, there are a limited amount of transitional housing units in Turlock. Staff is open to assessing any suggestions and proposed parcels and privately owned properties in order to develop or provide transitional housing. Funds are available through HUD and other sources to assist in the development of transitional housing units.

### **Long Term**

The City of Turlock in collaboration with its development partner, EAH, Inc. will be submitting its tax credit application in March 2019 for the third time in an effort to secure the remaining financing to construct the second phase of Avena Bella. Avena Bella Phase 2 will construct an additional 60 units of affordable housing for families at 30,40 and 50 percent of the Area median income. This is housing for low income working families. Results of the financing application will be known in June. If awarded, construction would commence within 180 days of the award.

### **Tiny Houses**

Tiny houses have gained traction with people who want to live a simpler life with fewer possessions and financial obligations, and who want to have a smaller environmental footprint. Some nonprofits are eyeing them as a possible solution for people priced out of overheated housing markets. Others see tiny houses as a solution to homelessness.

The difficulty has been where to place them. Those built on foundations must meet local building and zoning regulations. But many tiny houses are built off-site, sometimes without knowing where they will ultimately rest. That makes it difficult to know which building codes to meet, especially if owners plan to move them from place to place.

Bill Rockhill, the founding president of the American Tiny House Association and a New York-based builder who primarily builds tiny houses, said he and other builders try to follow uniform building codes for houses or a similar set of standards for RVs. Still, not all requirements can be met — the ladders in a tiny house may not meet requirements set forth for stairs, and lofts may not have high enough ceilings.

During construction, Rockhill takes photos of everything inside the walls so that customers can talk with building inspectors about construction. He said code enforcers can be flexible on some safety requirements, such as allowing a loft as long as it has a large enough escape window.

“It’s kind of the Wild West of building,” said Tony Gilchriest, a builder based in Washington, D.C. But Gilchriest notes that the lack of clear standards makes some builders more cautious. That is especially true when the owners of a tiny house plan to move it frequently, and it must be sturdy enough to be driven down the highway at 60 mph. “I think people overbuild because they’re afraid,” he said.

But Dan Buuck, a specialist on codes and standards for the National Association of Home Builders, insists that some tiny houses are filled with dangers. Smoke can accumulate more quickly in low-ceiling and loft areas, and ladders and small windows make it harder for help to get in and out.

In order to move a potential project forward, Turlock would need to meet with the Director of Development Services, Chief Building Official and Planning Manager to identify potential locations and resolve any building code issues. This effort could be done as a pilot project.

### **Donated trailers**

West County Community Services (WCCS), which is a licensed, non-profit, human services agency (501c3) in Sonoma County operates a program designed and funded to provide shelter and supportive care to people who would otherwise be homeless. They have site control of a small RV park and solicit the donation of RVs, travel trailers or 5th Wheels in good condition, 25 feet+ in length ready for immediate occupancy. Condition of the engine and transmission is not a concern as long as the living area, bathroom, plumbing, cooking and electrical systems are clean and in good working order. The value of your donation is tax deductible, and we will take care of the paperwork with DMV.

In a similar program in Florida, families can stay rent and utilities free for six to eight months. Within that time families also receive assistance with budgeting specialists, family and mental health counselors, career coaches, resume writers and banking professionals. The advantage of this program design is that it is portable. So when the working family member gets a job - if it's further away - the RV or trailer can move to another RV park so they can still work and if they don't have transportation they can still get to their jobs.

### **Hotels and office buildings converted for families**

If a hotel became available, that would be an easy option and there is funding to acquire such a project. Converting office space is a little more difficult for two reasons. First, the change of use will require major upgrades life safety for larger occupancies, based on the age of the building. Turlock has a commercial vacancy rate of 2%. This option is worth exploring specific parcels and property where specific issues can be addressed to ascertain viability of a project site.

### **Housing First Projects**

Housing First is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life. This approach is guided by the belief that people need basic necessities like food and a place to live before attending to anything less critical, such as getting a job, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use issues. Additionally, Housing First is based on the theory that client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive

service participation, and that exercising that choice is likely to make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving their life.

*What are the elements of a housing first program?*

Housing First programs often provide rental assistance that varies in duration depending on the household's needs. Consumers sign a standard lease and are able to access supports as necessary to help them do so. A variety of voluntary services may be used to promote housing stability and well-being during and following housing placement.

Two common program models follow the Housing First approach but differ in implementation. Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is targeted to individuals and families with chronic illnesses, disabilities, mental health issues, or substance use disorders who have experienced long-term or repeated homelessness. It provides long-term rental assistance and supportive services.

A second program model, rapid re-housing, is employed for a wide variety of individuals and families. It provides short-term rental assistance and services. The goals are to help people obtain housing quickly, increase self-sufficiency, and remain housed. The Core Components of rapid re-housing—housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, and case management and services—operationalize Housing First principals.

The City of Turlock has issued an RFP for two properties that could be utilized with a Housing First Program. Housing First programs need a provider to do both property and case management services.

**Rent Control**

In November 2018, voters in California rejected Proposition 10, which would have repealed current restrictions on how much city governments can control or cap rents.

It was a bill that activists succeeded in getting on the ballot and it's no surprise California was a battleground: According to recent HUD data, 54 percent of all California renters are "rent-burdened"—meaning they spend more than a third of their income on rent—and 29 percent are "severely" rent-burdened, meaning they spend more than half of their income on rent. Existing affordable housing programs are simply not producing enough affordable units. But rent control would do very little to help those burdened with high rents, and with rent-control activists in states like Illinois, Colorado, and Oregon all pushing similar restrictions, this issue is likely to rear its head again and again in cities and states across the country.

There's a reason why, after a brief period of experimentation with rent control in the aftermath of World War II, a cross-ideological consensus emerged opposing the policy. It was Assar Lindbeck, a noted socialist economist, who famously said "Next to bombing, rent control seems in many cases to be the most efficient technique so far known for destroying cities." What did Lindbeck understand that current advocates don't?

The primary problem with rent control is that it leads to fewer housing units. The first thing to happen under rent control is that many apartments are simply taken off the rental market. Researchers note this effect in a 2007 paper that studies rent control in Boston. Higher-quality units are converted into condominiums or co-ops, for which prices are not regulated, while mostly lower-quality units remain on the controlled rental market.

Rent control also reduces the number of housing units by discouraging future construction. If developers are worried that rent control will be applied retroactively to their new units, they will be hesitant to build new rental housing. With a shortage of units at the heart of California's housing crisis, allowing cities to extend rent control to newer units or apply it to existing units would make the affordability crisis worse in both the near and long-term. This is partly why California originally joined a majority of U.S. states in placing tight rules on cities' ability to adopt rent control.

But rent control means more than lost units. Even if we restrict ourselves to looking at rent-controlled units, the policy doesn't always help low-income families. For example, many of the people who are able to secure a scarce rent-controlled unit aren't actually low-income. In a 1989 study of rent control in New York City, researchers found that the city's rent controls were inefficiently targeted, thus benefiting upper and middle-income renters as much as low-income renters.

Beyond merely not helping low-income tenants, there's good evidence that rent control might actually hurt them in the long run. The same study found that tenants in rent controlled units were less mobile than similarly situated tenants renting market-priced units. Since rent control works like a lottery, tenants in controlled units often end up staying in one place to capture the benefits of artificially-low rent, even if they would otherwise have moved.

### **Homeless Veterans**

There are around 40,000 homeless veterans in the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. More than 11,000 of them live in California. The state has seen a 17 percent rise in homeless vets since 2016. Stanislaus County has more than 200 homeless veterans and Turlock has between 25-30 homeless veterans. Stanislaus County Housing Authority manages the HUD –VASH voucher program and there are vouchers available for qualified veterans.

The city of Riverside is the only city in California to end veteran homelessness, according to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. It is one of 62 communities in 32 states to do so. Turlock can study and adopt some of those best practices in order to end veteran homelessness here in Turlock.

Many homeless vets suffer from substance abuse and mental illness. To help find permanent housing for homeless veterans, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) currently run a combined program (HUD-VASH).

The HUD-VASH program combines Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV), which can be used for privately-owned housing for veterans with VA case management and clinical services to eligible homeless veterans. Since 2008, HUD-VASH has allocated more than 85,000 vouchers to veterans experiencing long-term or repeated homelessness.

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Thank you for your diligence in reading through this information.