



# A PATHWay to the Future: 2024-2028 Strategic Plan



March 2024

## DEAR PATH TEAM AND STAKEHOLDERS,



I am thrilled to welcome you to the beginning of the next chapter in PATH's remarkable journey. As we embark on our 40th year of service, it is with a profound sense of pride and gratitude that we share this plan for the next five years. Since our inception, PATH has been a beacon of hope, providing shelter, support, and compassion to those experiencing homelessness. Our commitment to this mission has never wavered, but as we step into this milestone year, we find ourselves confronted by challenges more complex than ever before.

The need for homeless services has grown significantly, casting a shadow of urgency over our work. The relentless rise in homelessness is a stark reminder that our mission is far from accomplished. It calls upon us to adapt, innovate, and amplify our efforts to meet the pressing needs of our communities. While it is disheartening to see the numbers of our homeless neighbors swell, it is equally inspiring to witness the resilience, dedication, and unwavering compassion of our PATH team, partners, and supporters.

Over the years, we have achieved remarkable milestones, touched countless lives and restored hope to those who had lost it. Our team's commitment has led to significant accomplishments, from providing safe shelter to thousands, to delivering essential services that empower individuals on their journey to stable housing.

Yet, there is more work to do. The challenges we face are complex, and the road ahead is arduous, but I am confident in our collective strength and unwavering resolve. As we unveil our 2024-2028 strategic plan, I want to emphasize this document is not a static roadmap, but a dynamic component of our daily work.

In the pages that follow, you will find our vision for the future, a blueprint that reflects our dedication to addressing the evolving needs of those we serve. This plan is a testament to our belief that homelessness is a battle we can win through persistence, innovation, and unity.

As we celebrate our 40th year, we also celebrate the incredible impact we have made and the lives we have transformed. Together, we have been a lifeline for many, and we will continue to be that beacon of hope for countless more in the years to come. Our journey continues, and I am honored to walk it alongside each and every one of you.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication and commitment to our mission.

With gratitude and determination,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Hark Dietz".

Jennifer Hark Dietz, LCSW  
Chief Executive Officer

# INTRODUCTION

## MISSION

“To end homelessness for individuals, families, and communities.”

## VISION

“PATH envisions a world where every person has a home.”

PATH was founded in Los Angeles in 1983 and since that time has pioneered bold and effective approaches to assist people experiencing homelessness. Over the past three years, PATH has continued to grow to meet the needs of people throughout California and the 150 cities and regions that it serves.

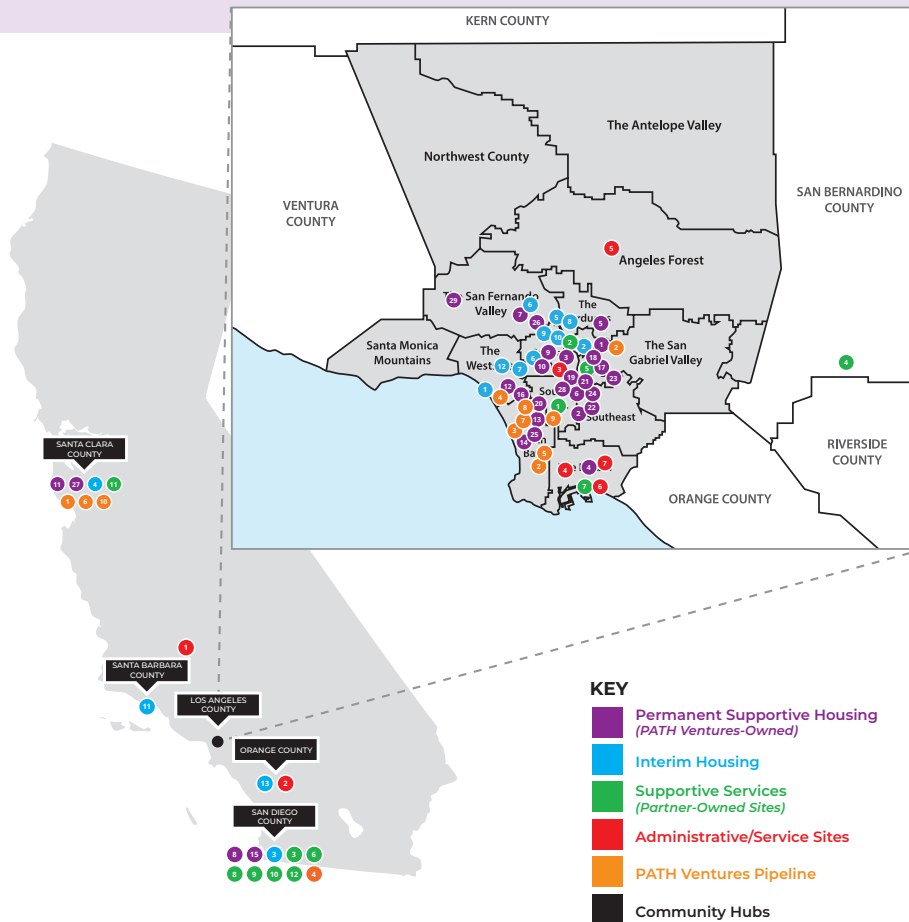
Today, PATH operates regional hubs in Greater Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego County, Santa Clara County, and Santa Barbara/Central Coast (see map). In 2020, PATH had over 700 employees with a budget of nearly \$90 million. That number has since increased to over 1,200 employees and a budget exceeding \$150 million. PATH serves more than 26,000 people across California annually, with over 4,000 of those people finding permanent housing in 2023.



In 2007, PATH created PATH Ventures (PV), a real estate development arm that builds and renovates affordable and permanent supportive housing. PV owns and operates 26 affordable housing communities independently and in collaboration with third-party partners, totaling 1,696 units. In addition, 152 units at two sites are under construction and 11 more projects are in the predevelopment pipeline. With PATH as service provider, tenants of PATH Ventures communities receive the wraparound supportive services necessary to help them reintegrate into the local community, increase independence, and achieve long-term stability.

PATH Enterprises supports the efforts of PATH and PATH Ventures by operating activities that support solutions to end homelessness. This currently includes site acquisition, interior design and community engagement. As part of this plan, PATH Enterprises will be expanding to property management to better serve the individuals residing in PATH Ventures buildings.

# COMMUNITIES WE SERVE



## Our Locations

- Bonnie Brae Village
- Flor 401
- La Kretz Villas
- Long Beach & 21st Apartments
- Marmion Way Apartments
- New Pershing Apartments
- NoHo Seniors Villas
- PATH Connections Housing
- PATH Metro Villas I
- PATH Metro Villas II
- PATH Villas at 4th Street
- PATH Villas at Del Rey
- PATH Villas at South Gate
- PATH Villas at West Carson
- PATH Villas El Cerrito I
- PATH Villas Eucalyptus
- PATH Villas Gramercy
- PATH Villas Hollywood
- PATH Villas Montclair
- PATH Villas Osage
- Rossmore Hotel Apartments
- Simone Hotel Apartments
- Star Apartments
- The Six Apartments
- Vermont Villas
- Villas at Gower
- Villas on the Park
- Weldon Hotel Apartments
- Winnetka Village Apartments

- PATH at Pacific Sunset Shelter A Bridge Home
- PATH Casa Azul
- PATH Connections
- PATH Evans Lane
- PATH Highland Gardens
- PATH Hollywood Studio Club A Bridge Home
- PATH La Cienega
- PATH Metro Los Angeles Community Hub
- PATH Riverside
- PATH Riverside Families
- PATH Santa Barbara Hub
- PATH Westside Hub
- PATH Yale Navigation Center

- 83rd Street
- Alvarado Lakeview Apartments
- Atmosphere Apartments
- Bloomington
- Casa Carmen
- Cypress
- Family Commons
- Ivy Senior Apartments
- The Link
- Trinity Place
- Vela Apartments
- Zephyr

- Bakersfield Satellite Office
- Costa Mesa Office
- Family Solutions Center
- Harbor Sites Office
- Lancaster Satellite Office
- Long Beach Multiservice Center
- Long Beach Office

- Pacific Motor Inn
- PATH Villas East Los Angeles
- PATH Villas Inglewood
- PATH Villas Marina Del Rey
- PATH Villas on Normandie
- PATH Villas on the Row
- PATH Villas Warren Lane
- PATH Villas Windsor Hills
- Veteran Commons
- Winchester Apartments

## PATH'S FAMILY OF AGENCIES PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING CORE SERVICES

### Person-Centered Supportive Services

Strategic street outreach, housing-focused case management, system navigation, medical and behavioral health connections, employment assistance, and housing placement and retention.

### Housing

#### Interim Housing

- Low-barrier, harm reduction, and recuperative care

#### Permanent Housing

- Housing development and rehabilitation; on-site supportive services; rapid re-housing; housing navigation, placement, and retention; and landlord engagement

### Community Mobilization

Advocacy, volunteer engagement, and training

# CONTEXTUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

In the sprawling landscapes of California, homelessness continues to be the issue of our time, where challenges and innovations intertwine. Since the release of the A PATHway to the Future strategic plan in 2021, California has witnessed significant shifts, casting a unique light on the Golden State's persistent homelessness challenges and the extraordinary efforts of homeless service providers and affordable housing developers to end homelessness.

In 2020, as the world grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic, California's homeless population faced unique vulnerabilities. Overcrowded shelters and limited access to sanitation facilities presented grave risks. The state and local response was swift, with the launch of initiatives like Project Roomkey, which transformed hotels into shelters to provide a safe haven. By 2023, the pandemic's immediate threat may have waned, but its impact on homelessness and the ongoing concern for health and sanitation lingered as a lasting legacy.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic also served to expose a housing infrastructure across the nation and in the state that was already faltering. However, California's housing affordability crisis, a defining challenge, deepened its roots since 2020. The cost of living, especially in major cities, soared to astronomical heights. Despite significant investments in funding for affordable housing development, the need still far outpaces the supply. For low-income individuals and families, securing stable housing continues to be evasive. In 2023, this crisis intensified further, resulting in a larger homeless population seeking refuge on the state's streets.

California's journey through these years has transformed beyond just policies. The people's perception of homelessness evolved, thanks to increased visibility and awareness. The pandemic cast a glaring spotlight on the issue, potentially galvanizing public support for funding and initiatives aimed at addressing homelessness. Homelessness is more visible and urgent, and there are coalitions building around and outside of the sector to address the issue, despite the setbacks like the increasing calls for criminalization and pushback around funding. There is also increased recognition that the system can only do so much and there is a





need to focus on prevention and mitigating the upstream issues driving inflow.

In this unfolding narrative, California's fight to end homelessness remains a dynamic and complex issue. It is shaped by the enduring impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the relentless march of the housing affordability crisis, evolving government strategies, shifting public sentiments, and the contentious political divide. Through it all, California perseveres, seeking innovative ways to provide hope and shelter to those in need on its streets.

And organizations like PATH persevere and in fact, grow and innovate, to meet the critical moment. Despite the challenges between 2021-2023, PATH has been strategic in managing growth, successful in meeting many of the goals in its 2021-2023 strategic plan (see results from [A PATHWay to the Future: 2021-2023 Strategic Plan](#)), and is poised to meet the evolving needs that the next five years will bring. Given its current position, PATH is opting to issue this five-year strategic plan to address key areas for the organization, focusing on continuing to be strategic about managing growth and providing flexibility to guide its effectiveness in working toward the mission to end homelessness for individuals, families, and communities.



# STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholder engagement and outreach are critical components of any strategic planning process, but especially for mission-driven, client-centric organizations like PATH.

The strategic planning process was divided into two phases: 1) an assessment phase to measure where PATH is today, particularly in relation to progress on the current strategic plan and the current context and 2) a planning phase to focus on the development of a plan with goals and imperatives that will guide the organizations over the next several years.

Stakeholder engagement and outreach were cornerstones of both phases.

During the assessment phase, insights were gathered from more than 480 people including 361 total surveys from staff, board members, and external stakeholders. The process also incorporated in-depth interviews with nine external stakeholders, which included people from local government, nonprofit organizations, and funding partners operating across the state. And finally, eight focus groups were hosted with 113 participants including PATH staff, clients, board members, and the Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Council.

During the planning phase, there were an additional six focus groups hosted for staff, the board, and the DEI Council that was attended by 90 participants.

Throughout both phases, there were biweekly meetings with a core team of representatives from the PATH leadership team as well as regular touchpoints with the senior management team and the board of directors for both PATH and PATH Ventures.



Again, effective stakeholder engagement in the strategic planning process for PATH is a cornerstone of success. It ensures that services remain client-centered, responsive to the community, and sustainable. By fostering collaboration and trust with all stakeholders, PATH can continue its work towards ending homelessness.

# STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

- **Capacity** At PATH, we recognize that our ability to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our unhoused neighbors hinges on our capacity to respond effectively and compassionately to their needs. Capacity is the cornerstone of our mission. It encompasses the skills, resources, and partnerships necessary to provide comprehensive care and empowerment to those experiencing homelessness.

As one of our strategic imperatives, capacity focuses on strengthening our effectiveness to serve. We believe that enhancing our skills, resources, and partnerships is essential to increasing outreach, expanding services, and ensuring sustainability in our mission to end homelessness. We will invest strategically, develop expertise, foster collaborative partnerships, and measure our impact to better serve our community's most vulnerable individuals and families. Together, we commit to building the capacity required to make a lasting impact and create a future where homelessness is brief and non-recurring.

- **Equity** At PATH, we are deeply committed to the principle that all individuals, regardless of their circumstances, deserve equal access to essential support and opportunities. Equity lies at the heart of our mission. It means addressing systemic disparities that perpetuate homelessness and ensuring that historically marginalized communities receive the support they need. It also means ensuring that equity is embedded within and across the PATH internal systems, practices, and policies.

Equity, as one of our strategic imperatives, focuses on advancing equity in homelessness services. This commitment means addressing disparities, empowering communities, and driving systemic change. We will cultivate inclusivity, employ a data-driven approach, improve equity across our internal systems, engage with our communities, and form partnerships for advocacy. By pursuing this imperative, we aim to be a catalyst for change, dismantling barriers, uplifting the marginalized, and working towards a future where homelessness is a rarity for all.





• **Advocacy** At PATH, we are unwavering in our commitment to effecting meaningful and lasting change for individuals experiencing homelessness. Advocacy means speaking out on behalf of those without a voice, championing their rights, and working to change policies and systems that perpetuate homelessness. By steadfastly pursuing this strategic imperative, we commit to being a powerful force for change.

Advocacy, as one of our central strategic imperatives, focuses on amplifying our advocacy efforts in the fight for comprehensive homelessness solutions. This enables us to influence policy, raise awareness, and leverage resources for those experiencing homelessness. We are committed to engaging stakeholders, educating, and mobilizing our supporters, monitoring progress, and amplifying the voices of those impacted by homelessness. By pursuing this imperative, we aim to be a powerful force for change, working towards a future where everyone has access to safe, stable and affordable housing.

• **Quality** At PATH, we are dedicated to providing the highest quality of services to all of the people we touch – this means the individuals experiencing homelessness, the employees who provide those services, and the partners who help us amplify our efforts. Quality means not only addressing immediate needs but also delivering services that empower individuals to rebuild their lives with dignity and respect.

Quality, as one of our central strategic imperatives, focuses on prioritizing and enhancing the quality of our services, ensuring that every person we serve receives the highest level of support. It is fundamental to our mission, enabling us to maximize positive outcomes, build trust, and foster continuous improvement. We are committed to a person-centered approach, staff training and development, performance measurement, and stakeholder engagement to provide effective, compassionate, and respectful services. By pursuing this imperative, we aim to work toward a future where homelessness is a solvable challenge, and every individual has access to high-quality support for rebuilding their lives with dignity.



# ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

STAFFING AND HUMAN RESOURCES	YEAR				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1. Establish a robust feedback system that fosters continuous improvement, professional development, and employee engagement, ensuring that staff members feel valued and supported in their roles.</b>	●	●	●		
<b>2. Develop and implement a targeted benefits communication strategy that effectively communicates and educates staff on the value of our benefits packages.</b>	●	●			
<b>3. Re-envision and implement a comprehensive onboarding enhancement plan, including assessment of the current processes and tools like the Employee Handbook to ensure that newly hired staff have a seamless and positive integration into the organization.</b>	●	●	●	●	●
<b>4. Build a strategic talent acquisition function that revolves around a competitive employer brand, engaging and standardized candidate experience, and streamlined service delivery for hiring managers.</b>	●	●	●		
<b>5. Streamline and optimize processes, operations, and infrastructure in order to provide prospective candidates and current employees with an exceptional and efficient customer service experience.</b>	●	●	●	●	●

INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS	YEAR				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1. Develop and conduct a comprehensive, agency-wide risk assessment annually.</b>	●	●	●	●	●
<b>2. Set targets for grant audits to increase compliance and maintenance of contracts.</b>	●	●	●	●	●
<b>3. Assess infrastructure gaps (support departments, by region) and outline a funder engagement strategy aimed at increasing funding for critical support and administrative functions.</b>	●				●
<b>4. Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for coordinating agency data systems.</b>		●	●		
<b>5. Develop a succession management plan for key senior leadership positions.</b>		●			
<b>6. Conduct ongoing assessment of new government grant opportunities and current contracts to ensure financial, operational, and program feasibility.</b>	●	●	●	●	●
<b>7. Enhance awareness, monitoring, and adherence to budget management principles to ensure improved financial responsibility and compliance across the organization.</b>	●	●	●	●	●
<b>8. Develop a targeted growth strategy for statewide expansion of operational and infrastructure support, emphasizing regional representation. Establish clear parameters to ensure effective and regionally inclusive development of support functions.</b>		●	●		

FINANCIAL STABILITY	YEAR				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Assess current financial systems (invoicing, accounts payable, accounts receivable) to determine if they meet the current need and have capacity for additional growth.	●	●			●
2. Develop a comprehensive strategy to implement the third phase of the compensation plan.	●				
3. Implement a statewide cost saving strategy, action plan and ongoing cost evaluation to reduce costs throughout the agency.	●	●	●	●	●
4. Grow private fundraising revenue at an annual rate of 10%. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Planned giving:</b> Launch formalized planned giving program with systems for soliciting, receiving, tracking, and recognizing planned gifts.</li> <li>• <b>Major giving (gifts of &gt;\$10K):</b> Increase the number of major gifts PATH by 5% annually by implementing systems that include portfolio and moves management, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.</li> <li>• <b>Goal for other individual donors (gifts of &lt;\$9,999):</b> Increase annual fund giving at PATH by 5% annually.</li> <li>• <b>Further diversify grant revenue by securing 5-10 new foundation and corporate grant funders annually.</b></li> </ul>	●	●	●	●	●
5. Continue developing a strong public and private grants portfolio that enhances PATH's mission-aligned operations with strategic contracts and critical budget-offsetting revenue.	●	●	●	●	●
6. Set parameters for program growth that bolster the overall organization's financial position.	●	●	●	●	●
7. Establish a \$10 million land acquisition and pre-development fund for PATH Ventures.	●	●	●	●	●
8. Starting with \$2M in 2024, establish a \$10M reserve fund for PATH by the end of 2028.	●	●	●	●	●

PROGRAM EXPANSION AND INNOVATION	YEAR				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Explore the creation of a property management program through PATH Enterprises.	●				
2. Develop a strategy to assess the role of CalAIM within the organization to maximize scalability as a standalone program and to enhance existing programs.	●	●			
3. Explore the development of basic income and homelessness prevention programs to determine feasibility for funding and implementation.	●	●			

EQUITY & INCLUSION	YEAR				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Continue to or ensure the Board has diverse representation in alignment with the people we serve. Provide experiential opportunities on equity and inclusion work within the organization.	●	●	●	●	●
2. Develop an advocacy and outreach strategy around Equity & Inclusion.		●	●		
3. Develop and release an annual Equity & Inclusion Report.	●	●	●	●	●
4. Revamp organizational values and explore the creation of an Equity & Inclusion statement.		●	●		
5. Strengthen data collection and analysis to inform client service delivery and staff experience.	●	●	●	●	●

COMMUNICATIONS	YEAR				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1. Assess current internal communications platforms and create systems and guidelines to drive staff to appropriate resources for information.</b>	●	●	●	●	●
<b>2. Develop and implement comprehensive messaging and narrative training programs for both staff and board members, enhancing their understanding of PATH's identity and mission.</b>	●	●	●	●	●
<b>3. Strengthen external storytelling and sharing of PATH impact by both strengthening current tools and incorporating new modes of communication.</b>	●	●	●	●	●
<b>4. Continue to track metrics that measure external reach, this includes social media, stakeholder emails and media placement.</b>	●	●	●	●	●

ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP	YEAR				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1. Increase awareness and knowledge of the causes of and solutions to homelessness among legislators and their staff through a legislative education and training program.</b>			●	●	●
<b>2. Continue to build the skillset of our staff to serve as advocates for PATH through staff training and the development of an internal PATH advocates corps.</b>		●	●	●	●
<b>3. Work to build political power to support solutions to the homelessness crisis through improved statewide and local coordination around advocacy.</b>	●	●	●	●	●

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE	YEAR				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1. Evaluate the current training strategy, culture, and curriculum, with a focus on refining and expanding offerings. Develop and implement recommendations to create a more comprehensive training strategy, fostering a culture that accommodates diverse offerings.</b>	●	●	●	●	●
<b>2. Explore the creation of a suite of leadership development and management training offerings, with a specific focus on supervisor training that includes both functional and soft skill/EQ training, either in-house using current systems or via outsourcing and with a focus on varied learning modalities.</b>		●	●	●	
<b>3. Assess the feasibility of developing cost-effective strategies for professional development offerings (e.g., continuing education, flextime for schooling, the re-establishment of a mentoring program).</b>			●	●	●
<b>4. Create opportunities for enhanced staff networking and cross-training with a focus on both informal and formal gatherings, cross-departmental and regional learning opportunities, and more.</b>	●	●	●	●	●

Within the context of the PATH strategic plan and organizational goals, it is important to acknowledge that several of the proposed goals are not cost-neutral. Consequently, a comprehensive cost analysis and the identification of requisite funding streams to support these objectives are essential. This financial planning process may impact the timeline for implementation, as PATH prioritizes responsible resource allocation to ensure the successful realization of these goals. The commitment to transparency and responsible financial management remains pivotal for PATH in achieving the long-term objectives effectively and ensuring that PATH can continue to meet its mission and values.



# STRATEGIC REVIEW PROCESS

In order for this strategic plan to be a tool for action and continuous improvement, PATH will engage in a regular strategic review process to hold itself accountable to its goals and imperatives and, where necessary, make corrections and adjustments.

The CEO and senior management team are responsible for ensuring that the goals are integrated into department and staff work plans. PATH will track progress toward the strategic imperatives and organizational goals in the Strategic Review Dashboard, which will report on key indicators and contextual factors in the plan.

PATH's quality assurance and compliance department will be responsible for updating the dashboard, and updates will be provided to PATH board and staff, as well as the broader public of supporters and partners, annually to share progress toward goals and report on recommendations and developments regarding its work to end homelessness.

