

HUMAN SERVICES

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07 HUMAN SERVICES

Providing progressive, high-quality human services for those who need them has been central to the City’s mission since its incorporation in 1984. This core mission is rooted in West Hollywood’s diverse populations, which include seniors, the LGBT community, Russian-speaking immigrants from the former Soviet Union, people living with HIV and AIDS and other disabilities, families with children, and people who are homeless. Many of these residents call West Hollywood home because they find support, acceptance, and others who share their cultural or social background and interests.

This chapter organizes polices and background information into the following sections:

- Social Services
- Arts and Culture
- Schools and Education

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

State of California law does not require that a city’s general plan address social services, arts and culture, or schools and education. These topics are addressed in this chapter because they promote West Hollywood’s health, safety and welfare, and because they reflect the core mission to support and serve its diverse population. West Hollywood was one of the first cities in California to incorporate a human services element into its General Plan.



The City sponsors an annual Senior Fair.

SOCIAL SERVICES

This section addresses social services within West Hollywood.

Context

Upon incorporation in 1984, one of West Hollywood's initial priorities was to provide social services for residents in need. One year later, the Department of Human Services was formed. Since its incorporation, the City has taken an innovative, active, and humanistic approach to identifying community needs and providing human services. The City provides services by contracting with local non-profit service providers.

Some social services are geared specifically toward the city's LGBT community. In the 1970s, West Hollywood, then an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, became a haven for a newly vocal and out-of-the-closet gay community. Today, most estimates put West Hollywood's LGBT community at over 40 percent of the City's population. Some of the City services particular to the LGBT community include counseling, legal services, employment placement, dispute resolution, medical services, and HIV prevention education. Local non-profit organizations also provide an important social network for LGBT youth, seniors, and people living with disabilities.

The City works closely with many groups to promote HIV prevention and provide services for those living with HIV/AIDS. This includes coordinating HIV/AIDS testing and running an ongoing public education campaign for HIV prevention. Moreover, the City coordinates with a number of non-profits that provide legal, mental health, financial, dental, medical, and substance abuse treatment support services for those living with HIV/AIDS.

The City provides many social services for seniors. According to the City of West Hollywood Community Study (2006), seniors comprise about 21 percent of West Hollywood's population. A network of social services helps to provide support so that seniors can remain independent in their own homes. Home-delivered meals, case management, in-home supportive services, mental health counseling, and handy worker services are some of the programs available. The City provides transit services to this population, including a subsidized taxi coupon and bus pass program, a fixed-route shuttle service, and Dial-a-Ride.

Further, the City provides ongoing outreach to its large Russian-speaking community, composed largely of immigrants from countries of the former Soviet Union. According to the 2000 Census, 18.6 percent of West Hollywood residents reported Russian or Ukrainian ancestry, with many Russian-speakers concentrated in West Hollywood's East Side. The City-supported social services are culturally competent to work with the Russian-speaking residents and some programs target this population specifically with citizenship preparation, language training, and social programming.

The City also provides a number of programs for the community at large, including mental health and medical services, services for people living with disabilities, legal and financial

assistance, food and nutrition programs, outreach and housing services for people who are homeless, employment services, substance abuse services, assistance to families, and counseling and recreation services for children and youth. The City also sponsors social-services-related transportation programs.



Local elementary school students contributed to In Our Global Village, a book documenting West Hollywood through the eyes of its youth.

Goal and Policies

HS-1: Maintain and pursue humane social policies and social services that address the needs of the community.

Intent: To continue support for social services programs that meet the changing needs of the West Hollywood community.

- HS-1.1 The City provides for comprehensive social services so that people can remain living independently in their own homes.
- HS-1.2 The City regularly informs the community about key public health issues.
- HS-1.3 The City regularly informs the community about available local social services and County and State entitlement programs.
- HS-1.4 The City maintains demographic data about the community to measure social services needs, service use and satisfaction levels. Target populations include:
 - People living with HIV/AIDS
 - Families with children
 - Seniors
 - People living with disabilities
 - Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community members
 - Russian-speaking immigrants
 - People who are homeless
- HS-1.5 The City will obtain feedback to assure community participation in planning, funding prioritization implementation, and evaluating the City's social services.
- HS-1.6 The City supports innovative HIV prevention education strategies.
- HS-1.7 The City supports the development and provision of nutrition programming targeting residents experiencing food insecurity.
- HS-1.8 The City supports families with children through its programs and services.
- HS-1.9 The City coordinates multi-jurisdictional efforts in providing human services and seeks funding for social services programs from county, state, and federal sources, where appropriate.
- HS-1.10 The City monitors human service needs over time and uses data to inform funding priorities.
- HS-1.11 The City should encourage childcare facilities in new development, facilitate the provision of childcare services in public facilities, and allow childcare services in areas zoned for residential use where they do not unreasonably disrupt their neighbors.
- HS-1.12 The City will endeavor to end homelessness through innovative social services and housing programs.

ARTS AND CULTURE

West Hollywood is a community known for arts and culture, with strong social networks, a rich sense of community, cross-cultural interaction, and diverse physical spaces for art of all kinds. The section below provides specific policies and a description of the existing context for arts and culture in the City.



Artist Dan Corson's "Empyrean Passage" illuminates the night sky with contemporary neon art during its temporary display.



Works of art created under the Urban Art program can be found citywide.



Artist Peter Shire's colorful geometric sculptures are installed on Santa Monica Boulevard.

Context

West Hollywood is a thriving commercial art hub for film, music, art, fashion, design and architecture. Three areas of the City function as key cultural centers: The Sunset Strip, which has a long history as one of the nation's centers of live popular music; The Avenues of Arts and Design, the West Coast's premier concentration of interior design studios, art galleries, showrooms, specialty shops, and restaurants; and The Pacific Design Center, the West Coast's leading resource for furniture and interior design. In addition, the City is home to several non-profit art and cultural organizations. These include: Celebration Theatre, which focuses on the LGBT experience; Classical Theatre Lab, a resident company of actors focusing on the classical theatre repertoire; Greenway Arts Alliance, which focuses on community-building through arts; MACHA Theatre, which advances women's culture, history and art; The Rudolf Schindler House, which holds art and cultural events and exhibitions; and MOCA PDC, a satellite exhibition space for the internationally known Museum of Contemporary Art of Los Angeles.

The City itself facilitates arts and culture in many ways. The Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission encourages broad participation in arts and culture, oversees City-sponsored arts, and administers an arts grant program. It also oversees the Art on the Outside program, which brings art out into the public realm to enhance the City's pedestrian-friendly culture. The City's Urban Art Program requires developers of certain projects to contribute one percent of the development valuation to public art. The City plays host to a number of community cultural events, including the Russian Cultural Festival, Pride Month activities, Summer Sounds concerts, Shakespeare in the Park, the Book Fair, and other ad hoc performances and exhibitions.

Partially because West Hollywood is such an attractive and successful hub for arts and culture, there is a lack of affordable and usable space for community-based theatre, exhibitions, and rehearsal space. The City is committed to ongoing efforts to provide space where possible.

Goals and Policies


HS-2: Support and encourage arts and culture in West Hollywood.

Intent: To maintain a rich artistic and cultural dimension of the community's identity, and to support cultural tourism initiatives that advance the City's economic development goals and priorities.

- HS-2.1 The City should support and/or establish cultural facilities to meet community needs for theater, art, intellectual exchange, and other cultural activities.
- HS-2.2 The City sponsors community festivals and art and cultural events in popular public spaces and street corridors to encourage community interaction, facilitate appreciation and expression of arts and culture, and promote social wellbeing.
- HS-2.3 The City should provide space in public facilities for use by local artists, cultural groups and institutions.
- HS-2.4 The City should feature work by local artists, cultural groups and institutions in the City's marketing and tourism materials and by allowing use of public open space by such entities.
- HS-2.5 The City may allow local artists, cultural groups and institutions to operate from residentially zoned areas where they do not unreasonably disrupt their neighbors.
- HS-2.6 The City should support local artists, cultural groups and cultural grants for exhibitions and performances to help make arts and cultural activities accessible to the community.
- HS-2.7 The City promotes partnerships and collaborations between the private, public, and nonprofit arts sectors to enhance arts and cultural activities within the community.
- HS-2.8 The City incorporates public art in public infrastructure and capital improvement projects where feasible.
- HS-2.9 The City supports and/or hosts public art exhibits in public community open spaces.
- HS-2.10 The City maintains standards and best practices for public art administration.
- HS-2.11 The City will support and/or establish funding sources for ongoing maintenance and upkeep of public art.
- HS-2.12 The City will maintain a partnership with the West Hollywood library to provide coordinated arts and cultural programming throughout the City.

HS-3: Promote a community with strong social networks and cross-cultural interaction.

Intent: To increase the community's well-being through a strong social network, a rich sense of community, and cross-cultural interaction.

- HS-3.1  The City should increase the amount of physical space available for community interaction and art and cultural events, with particular attention given to access by all members of the community, including those without access to an automobile.
- HS-3.2 The City encourages the participation of the community's many cultures in both the events it holds and the methods it uses to communicate with the public.
- HS-3.3 The City provides cultural programs for the elderly, youth, and vulnerable populations, and facilitates the use of public community spaces for such programs.
- HS-3.4 The City encourages periodic public gatherings open to the entire West Hollywood community.

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

West Hollywood supports high quality schools that are competitive with other schools within the region. The following section provides specific policies and a discussion of the existing context for schools and education in the City.

Context


The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) provides public school services to West Hollywood. Many students attend schools that are outside of the City limits but in close proximity, and some students from outside of West Hollywood attend schools in the City. Two public schools are located within City limits: one elementary school and one alternative high school. LAUSD provides a pre-kindergarten family literacy program and several early education and daycare programs. There are also a number of private schools in West Hollywood and the surrounding area.

Because the schools used by West Hollywood are operated by LAUSD, the City does not control school programming or facilities. However, the City supports educational programming through regular collaborative meetings, grant making, a youth scholarship program, and afterschool homework clubs. The City also has opportunities to coordinate with school operators on joint use of facilities.

Goal and Policies

HS-4: Support and collaborate with LAUSD and other educational providers.

Intent: To have high-quality schools.

- HS-4.1 The City collaborates with the Los Angeles Unified School District to maximize educational quality.
- HS-4.2 The City should work with the Los Angeles Unified School District to provide technical expertise, and to provide donated materials from the West Hollywood community such as books, equipment, computers and software for student use.
- HS-4.3 The City should continue the West Hollywood Scholarship program to provide opportunities for local students to continue their education after high school.
- HS-4.4  The City may support local schools' efforts at greening of schoolyards, and improvements such as xeriscaping, rainwater retention, and fruit/vegetable gardens.