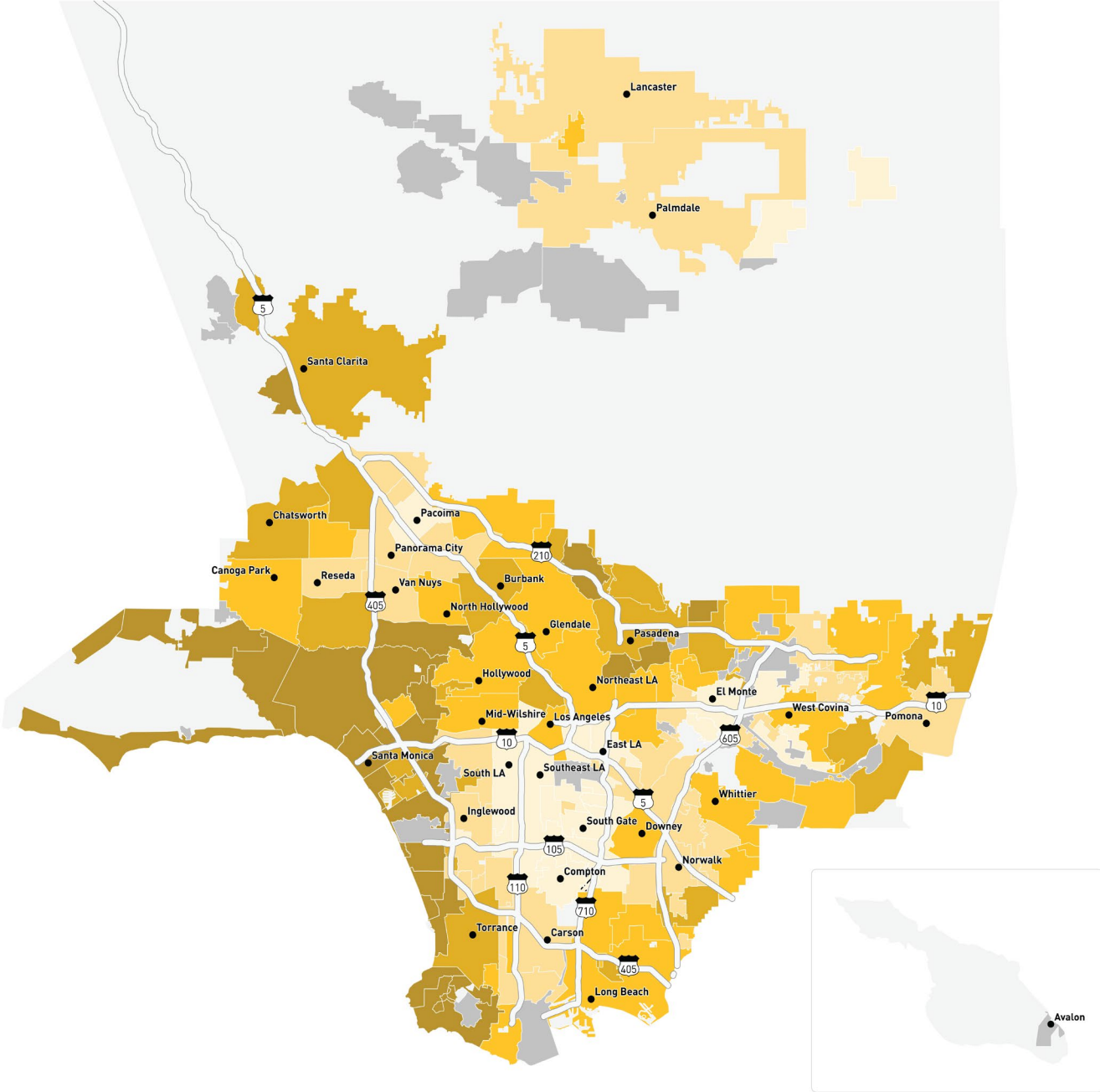


A PORTRAIT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY 2026

Behavioral Health
Commission

November 13, 2025



AGENDA

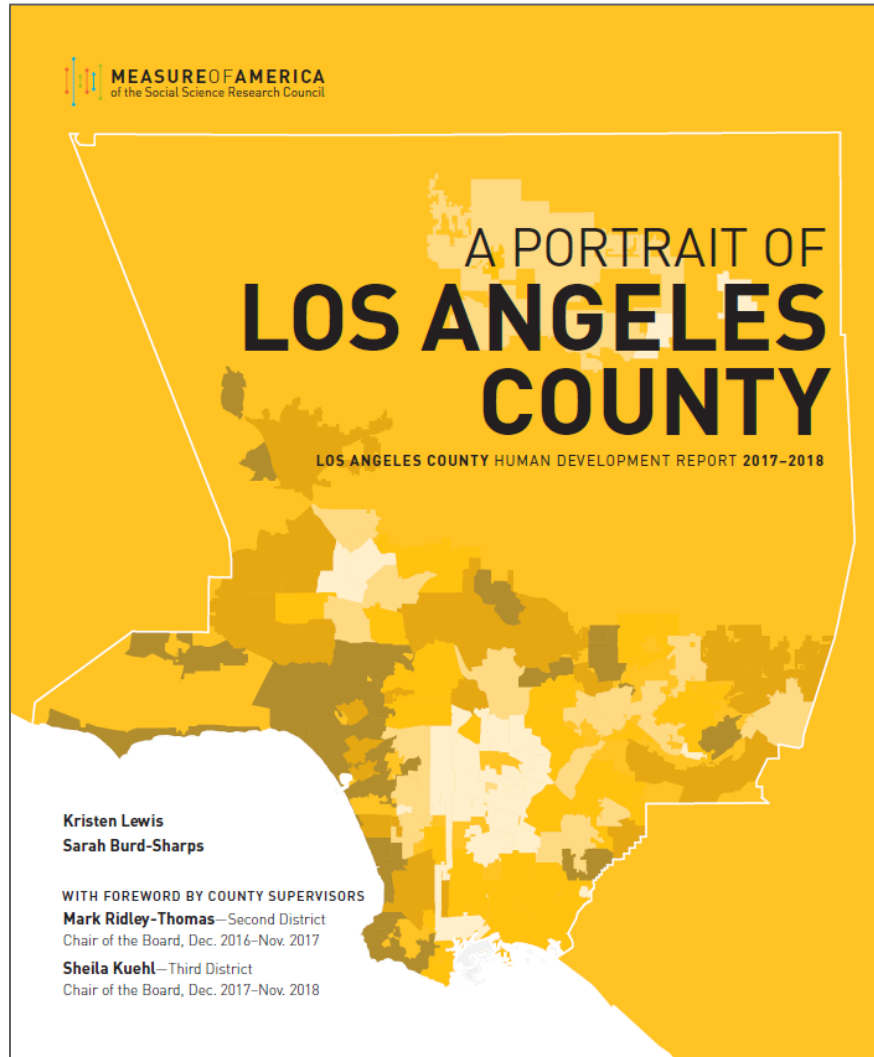
Overview of *A Portrait of Los Angeles 2026*

- Project background and impacts
- Overview of data, methods, and community engagement
- Launch, dissemination, and outreach strategy

Q & A

PORTRAIT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY 2017

Produced in partnership with the LA County Office of Child Protection,
Department of Children and Family Services & Department of Public Health

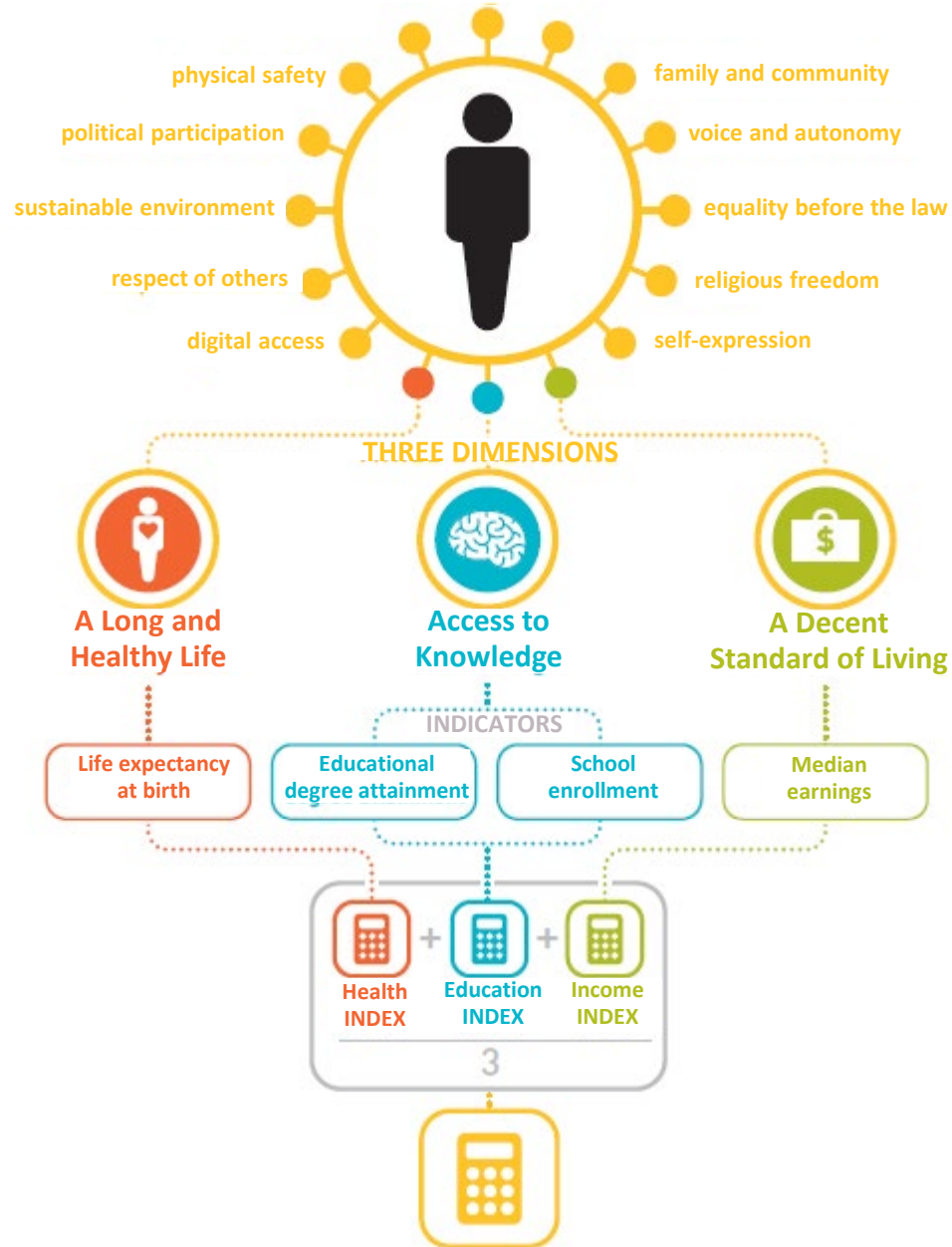


HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO MONEY METRICS LIKE GDP



Human development is about the real freedom ordinary people have to decide who to be, what to do, and how to live.

HOW IS HUMAN DEVELOPMENT MEASURED?



HDI BY PLACE

HDI

8.17–9.58

6.65–8.16

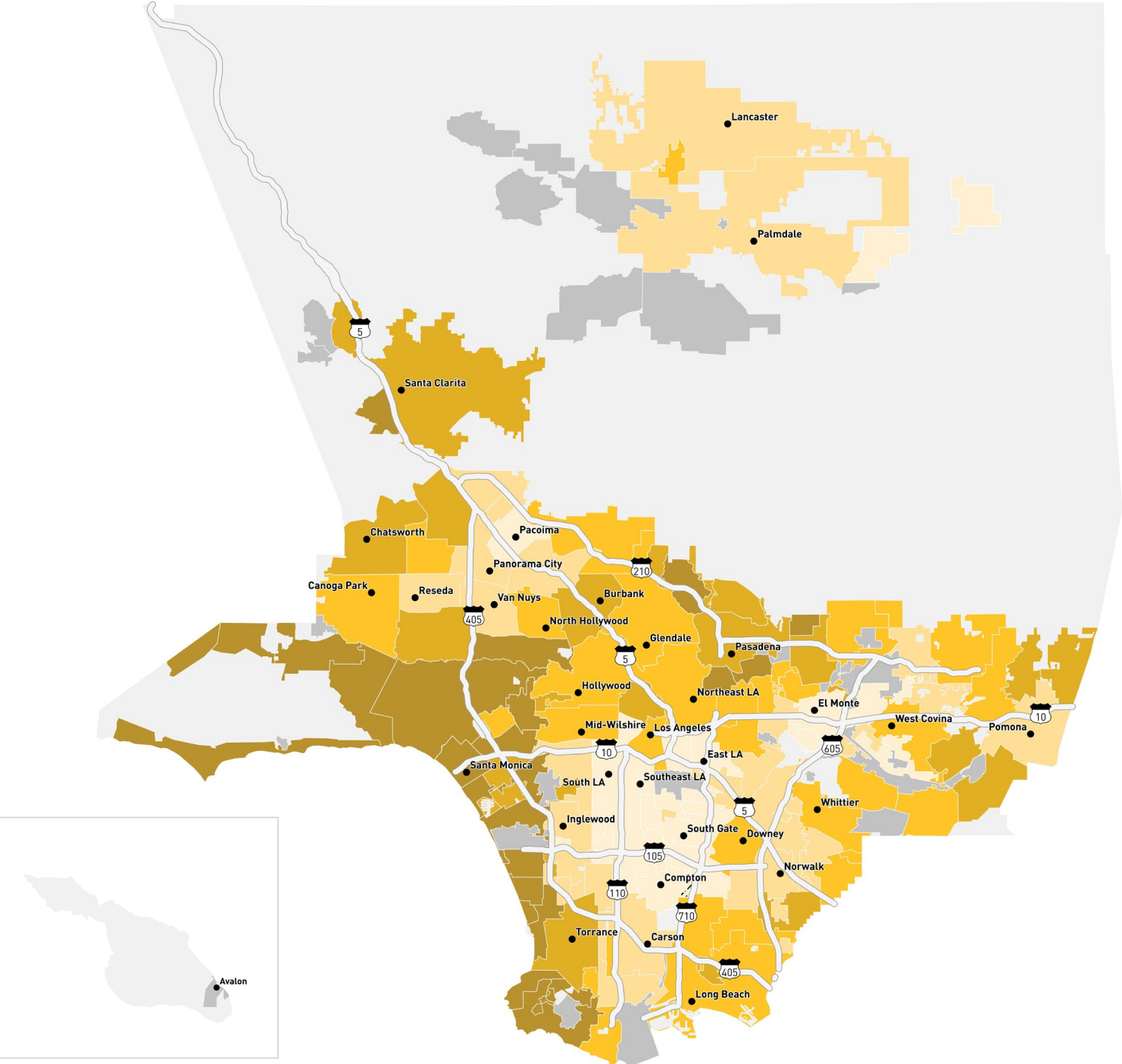
5.39–6.64

4.23–5.38

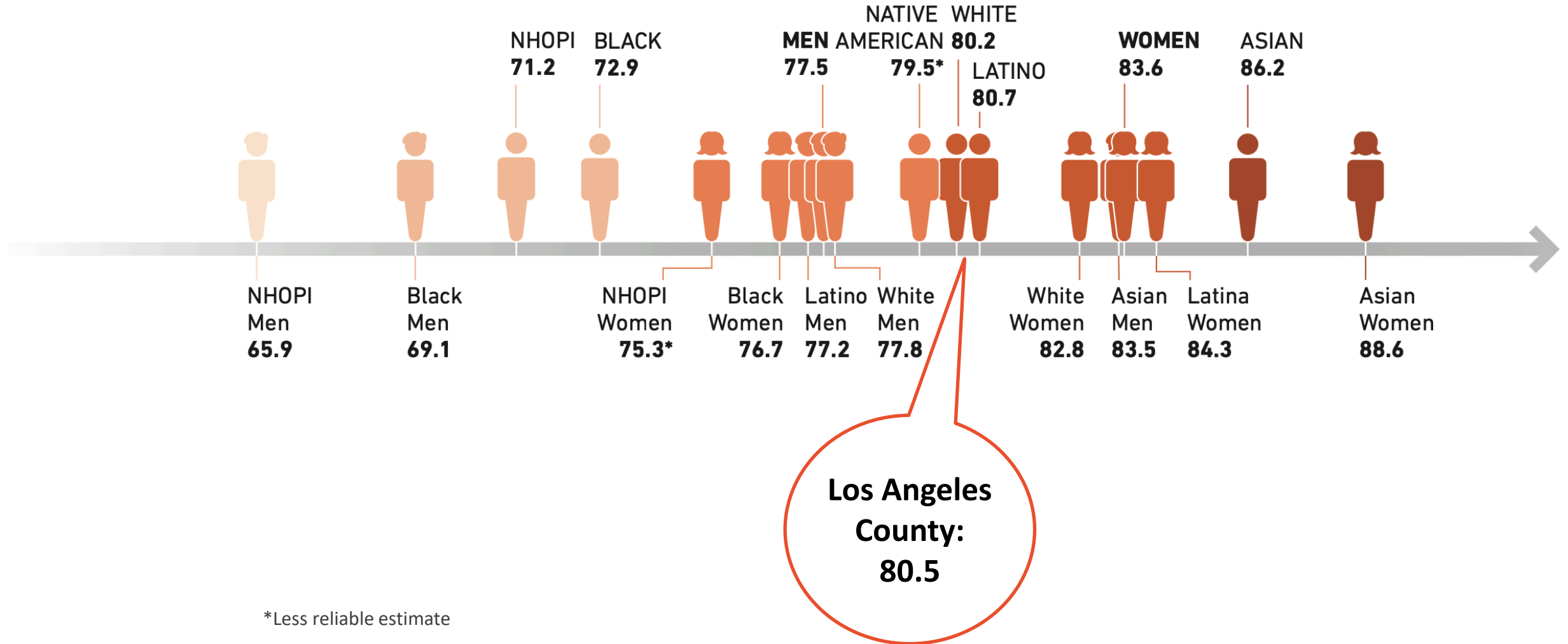
3.03–4.22

Less reliable

Unreliable



LIFE EXPECTANCY BY GENDER, RACE AND ETHNICITY



*Less reliable estimate

PORTRAIT OF LA COUNTY 2017: SOME IMPACTS

- The LA County Department of Mental Health—needs assessment & planning
- *A Portrait of LA County* served as a model for the Los Angeles County Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative’s “State of Black Los Angeles County” online interactive report series
- City of LA workforce development sites relocated based on need using the neighborhood HDI scores as a guide
- Community Development Commission—assessment of impediments to housing access and compliance with the Fair Housing Act



- LA County Healthy Design Workgroup—design a placed-based equity pilot in local communities like Florence-Graham.
- The Department of Recreation and Parks—development of its new operational strategic plan to expand park access and programming

PORTRAIT OF LA COUNTY 2026

Funded by the LA County Department of Mental Health, The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, and Cedars-Sinai, with additional support from First 5 LA and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

Provide a well-being snapshot and track change over time for:

- 140+ places (cities, unincorporated areas, City of LA Community Plan Areas)
- Racial and ethnic groups
- Women and men
- US-born and foreign-born Angelenos

Spotlight on the needs of specific populations, such as youth or Angelenos who are experiencing mental illness

New: Qualitative information and perspectives gleaned from facilitated community conversations and data walks

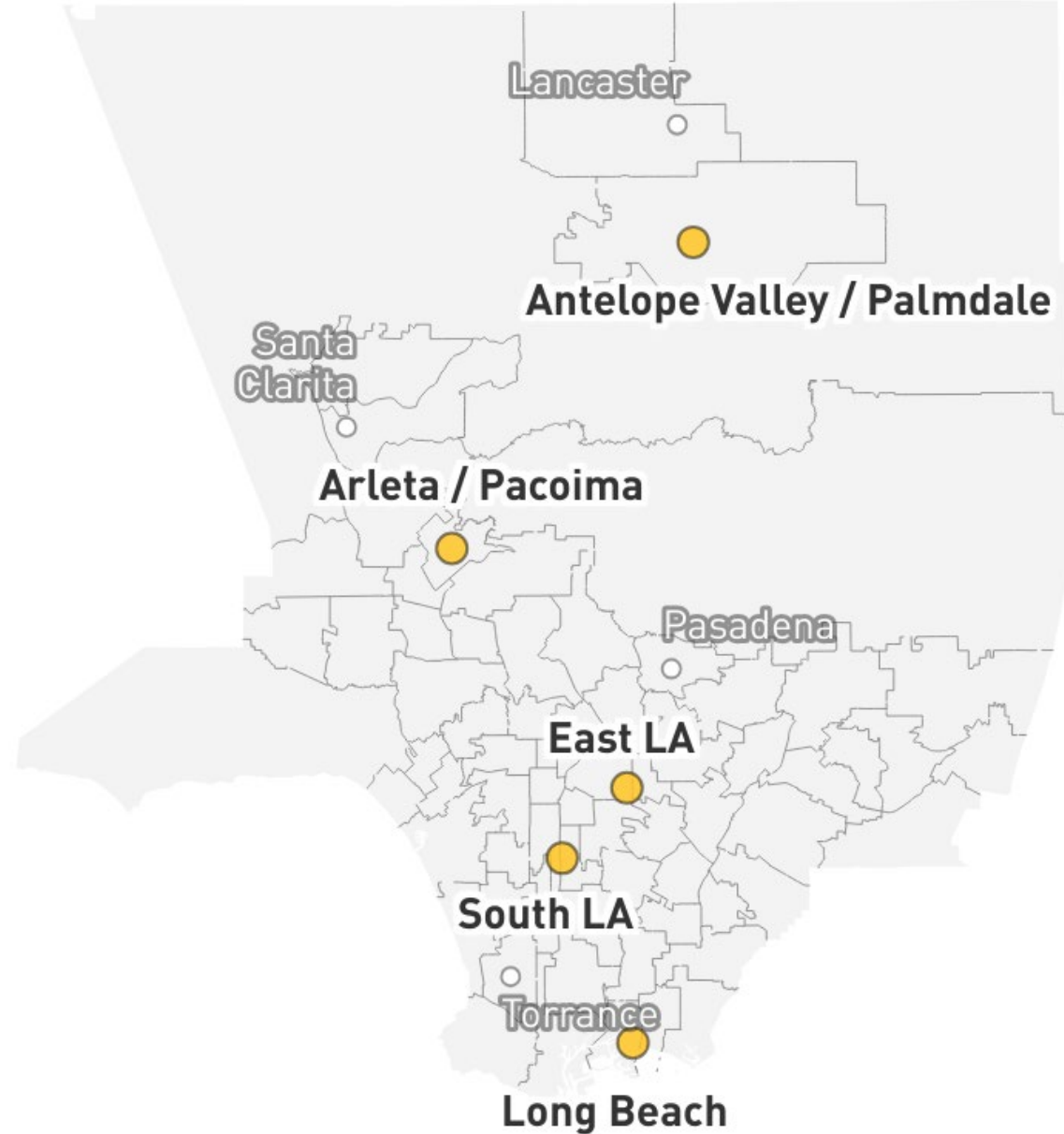
Produce report that synthesizes these analyses in ways that can inform equitable policymaking and resource allocation and meets the needs of our key stakeholders

DATA WALKS

- With First5 LA, convenings of local residents in five communities: Antelope Valley, Long Beach, East LA, South LA, and the San Fernando Valley
- Virtual convenings with specific population groups: youth, with the LA Youth Collaborative; and LGBT Angelenos, with the Los Angeles LGBT Center
- With the Department of Mental Health, a virtual data walk with the Behavioral Health Services Act Community Planning Team
- Facilitated conversation involving 400+ community members to share findings and understand priorities
- Results will inform our final recommendations and bring the real voices of community members to the report

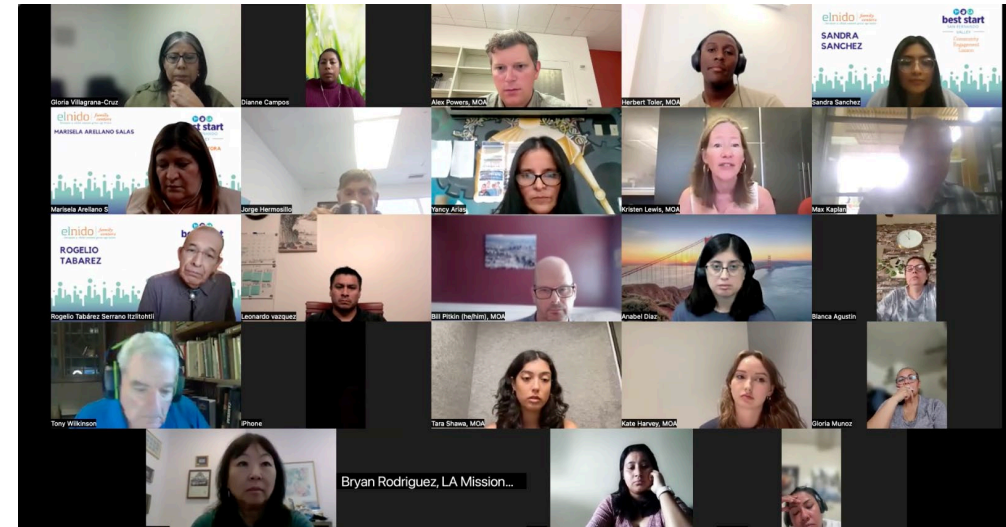


DATA WALK LOCATIONS – FIRST 5



DATA WALKS

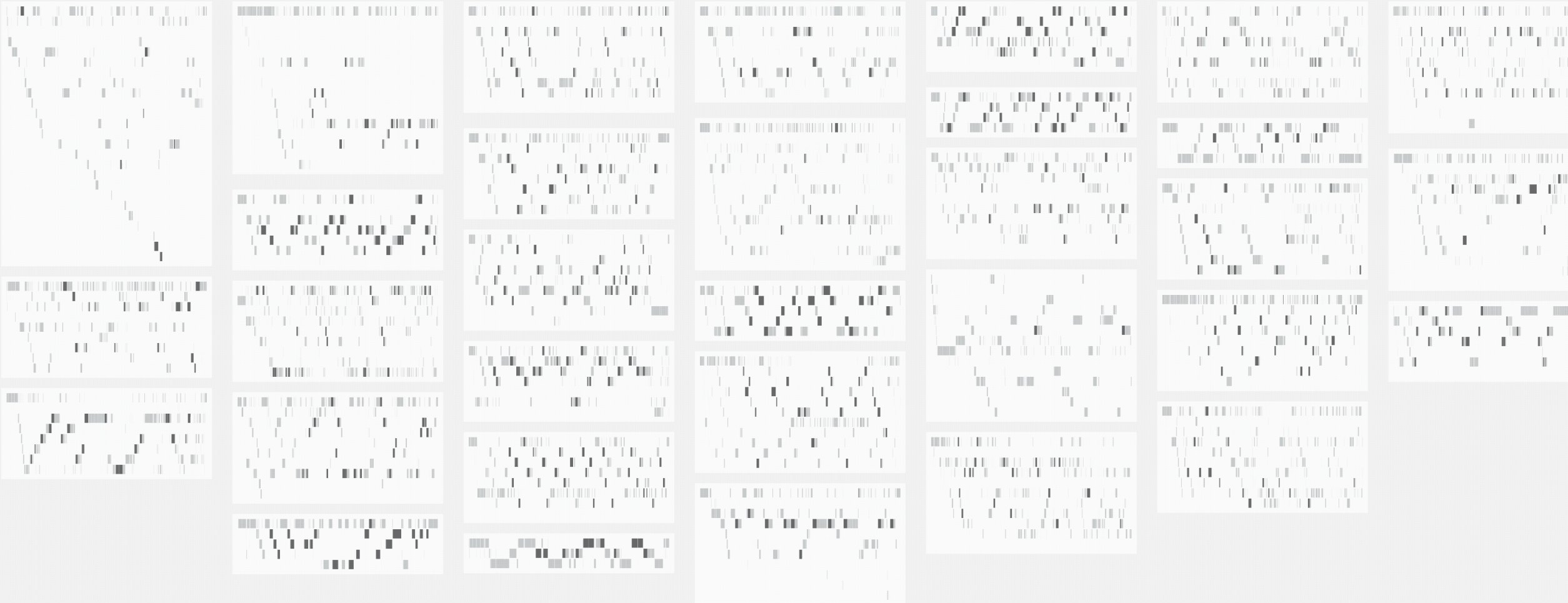
- 70 people across two in-person data walks in Long Beach and the Antelope Valley
- 350-400 people across virtual data walks



DATA WALK TAKEAWAYS

- Rising housing costs
- Mental health awareness & access to care
- Health care & other benefits for older Angelenos
- Unreliable public transportation
- Childcare affordability
- Pathways to educational and career opportunities

Voices by Conversation 



Mental Health

Teacher Quality

Academic Supports

Life Outside the Classroom

Sense of Belonging

School Discipline

Trauma

Advocacy

- Thirteen county departments and several city governments have joined with jurisdictions nationwide to advance racial equity through the Government Alliance on Race and Equity.
- LA County is now implementing a countywide Prevention Plan to prevent people from entering the child welfare, foster care, and juvenile and adult criminal justice systems.
- The Department of Public Health seeks to expand partnerships to reduce health disparities through its recently launched Center for Health Equity.

PRIORITIZE PLACES WHERE THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IS AT RISK.

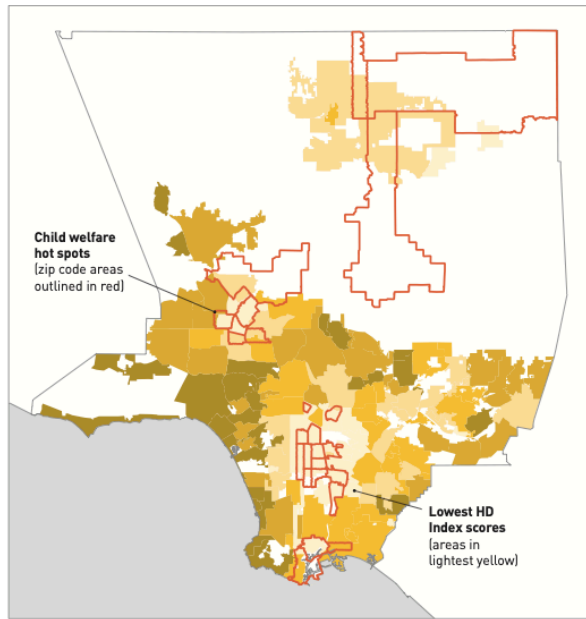
Closing gaps between high- and low-scoring places and increasing the countywide HD Index score will require investment in neighborhoods experiencing pervasive poverty, financial insecurity, poor health, trauma, low levels of education, exposure to pollution, and lack of neighborhood amenities like parks.

These places fall chiefly into Precarious LA and the roughly two dozen communities in Struggling LA that score below 4.0. These communities align

closely with the child welfare hot spots that the Advancement Project identified using child welfare referrals and the presence or absence of abuse and neglect prevention programs in different zip codes. (Hot spot zip codes are outlined in red and superimposed on this LA County HD Index **MAP 1**. The lighter colors show lower HD Index scores.) People living in these neighborhoods have extremely low earnings (all but two have earnings below \$23,500). Economic insecurity is their constant companion.

The county and its many partners could mitigate the severe financial stress and isolation that many families living in these communities experience by investing in economic opportunity and strengthening the five protective factors for child well-being. These factors, discussed on **PAGE 97**, include parental resilience, social connections, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and children’s own social and emotional competence.

MAP 1 Hot Spots Align Closely with Low HD Index Communities



- The Office of Child Protection’s Prevention Plan is expanding resources at the community level to promote positive outcomes in early learning, healthy development, and a host of protective factors for families, especially those most vulnerable to child welfare system involvement.
- The Center for Financial Empowerment, with public and private funding from the county, CitiBank, and others, is working to build financial assets and promote economic security for low- and middle-income earners.
- The South Bay Counseling Center’s “Thrive” program helps residents build upon their own skills to strengthen pathways to education and careers.
- Foundations are leading efforts to address inequities through innovative, intersectional, place-based approaches. For example, the Weingart Foundation has been explicit in its application of an equity lens to all of its funded projects.
- Community groups are working together using a variety of approaches to support families in fourteen Best Start Communities across the county.
- County libraries offer parent-and-me classes with mental health professionals in attendance to observe and talk with families about concerns and developmental issues.

REDUCE THE TOLL OF VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA.

Increasing the health and education components of the HD Index score requires reducing the violence to which children and other vulnerable groups are exposed.

Exposure to violence is inherently traumatic. Too many children experience mistreatment at the hands of family members, bullying by peers, and assaults in their neighborhoods, or witness violence at home or in their communities. Too many parents go about their daily lives carrying with them the trauma and pain of violent experiences in their childhoods. These experiences leave a mark. In the short term—in addition to causing immediate physical harm and even death—violent experiences can lead to a host of emotional, psychological, behavioral, and learning problems; they can also harm a child’s brain and body in ways that affect physical and mental health in the long-term. Though violence affects all types of people and communities, its burdens fall with particular weight and frequency on people living in poverty. Intimate partner violence, for instance, impacts individuals and families at every income level and in every racial and ethnic group, but women—especially Native American and black women—LGBTQ people, and immigrant populations are at particular risk. Solutions include improving data collection to enhance accountability, investing in community-centered solutions, forging partnerships with law enforcement, building the five protective factors, and ensuring that service providers are trained to recognize and address the needs of trauma survivors.

- Synergies between county departments, along with cities and their partner organizations, are creating opportunities to reduce violence and improve the quality of life in communities. The Parks After Dark program, initially started in three LA parks as a summertime gang prevention effort in 2010, now involves twenty-three parks thanks to collaboration among the City of Los Angeles and the LA County Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Health, and Sheriff’s Department. A 2017 study

Too many children experience mistreatment at the hands of family members, bullying by peers, and assaults in their neighborhoods, or witness violence at home or in their communities.

TIMELINE

Kickoff Advisory Committee Meetings	February	2025
Data, research, writing	March-September	2025
Data Walks in communities	June-July	2025
First draft to Advisory Committees	End June	2025
Advisory Committees Agenda for Action Discussion	September-October	2025
Design	October-December	2025
Report launch	March	2026
Outreach and dissemination	January-March	2026



You are here

LAUNCH AND OUTREACH STRATEGY

Launch: March 2026, either a stand-alone event or a session during a larger event

Outreach:

- Communications firm for media outreach
- Poster, powerpoint and training, and printed report for DMH
- Presentations for Board of Supervisors and other County leaders, Advisory Committee members' organizations, other civil society organizations and networks, data walk partner organizations, and funders' grantees
- Possibly: Additional data walks with new audiences



thank you!

www.measureofamerica.org

contact@measureofamerica.org



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