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No Going Back:

TOGETHER FOR AN EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE LOS ANGELES

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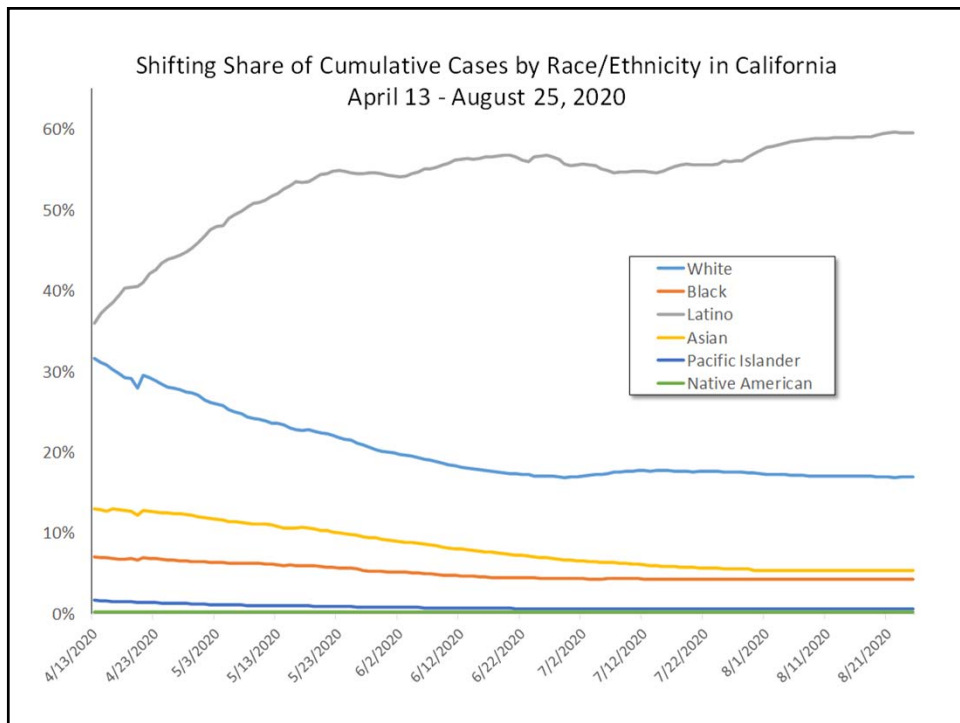
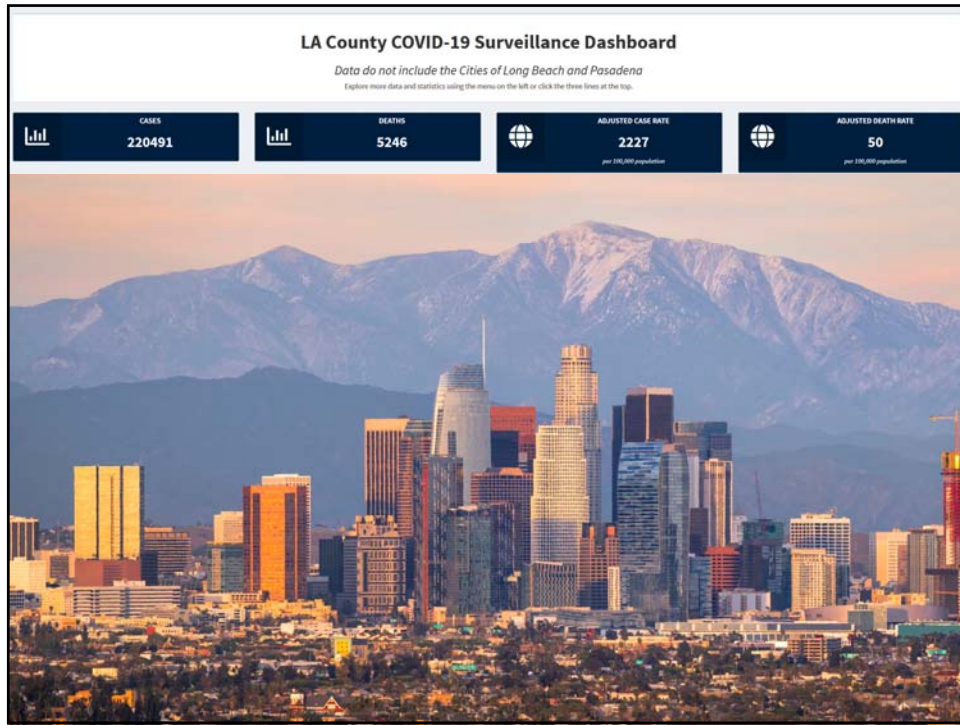
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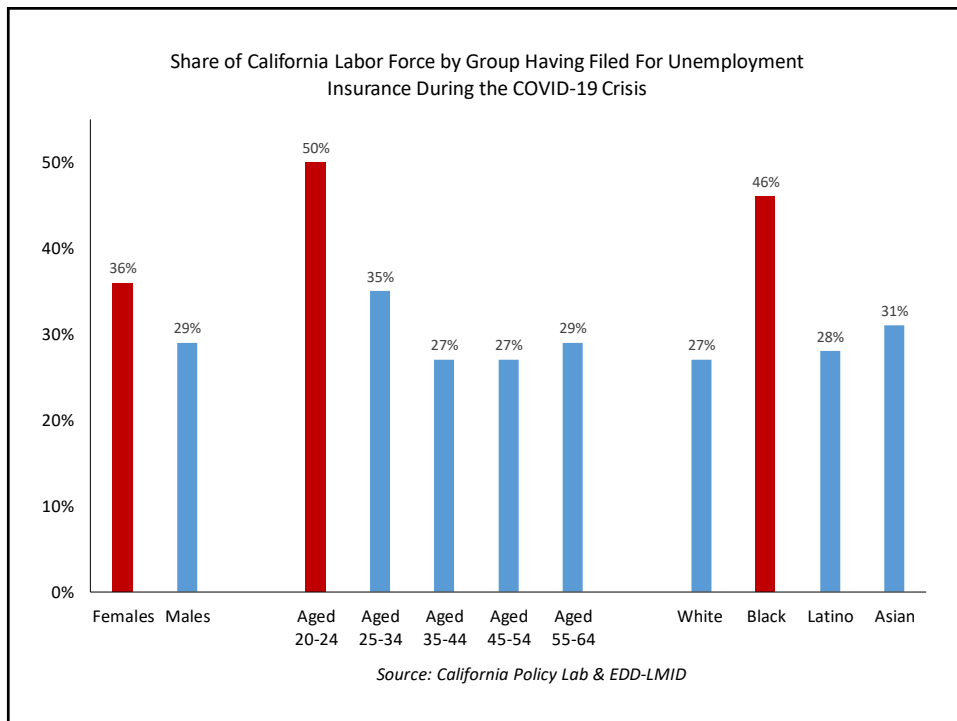
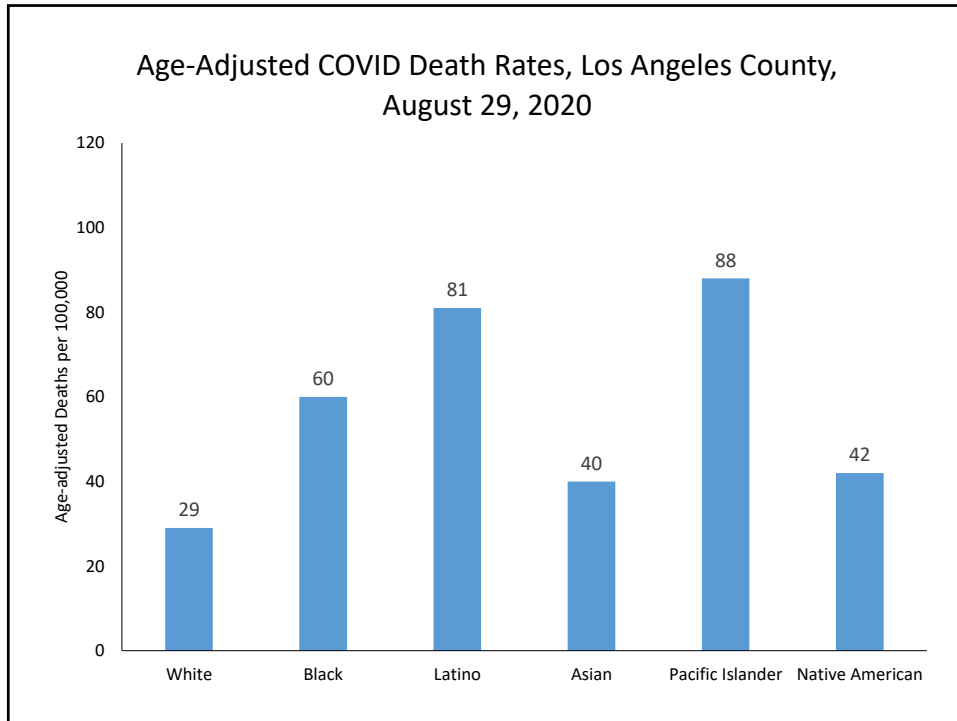

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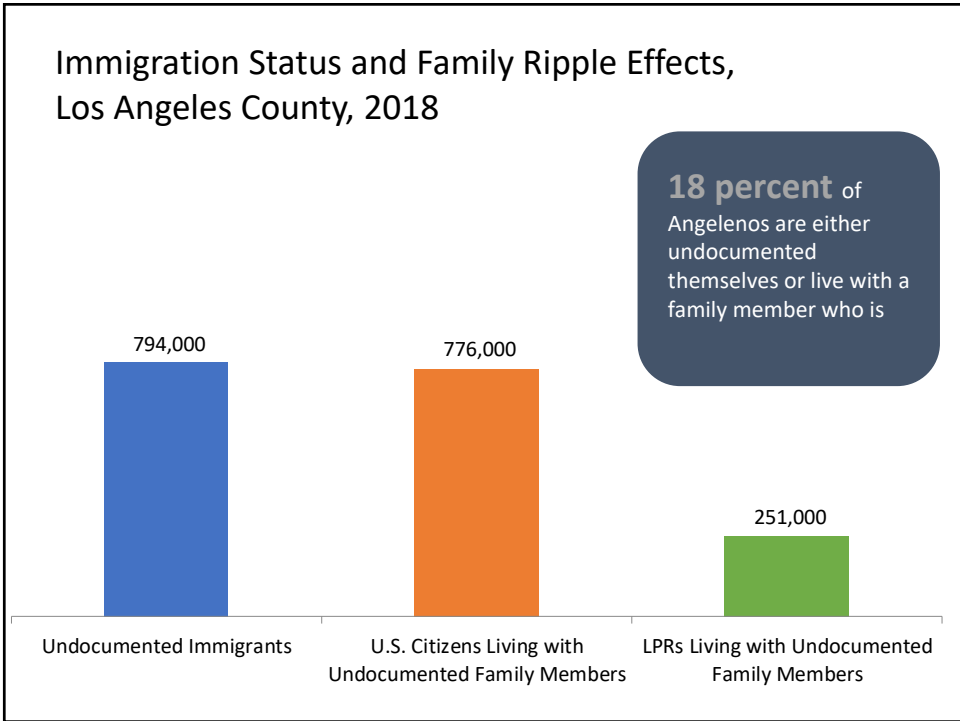
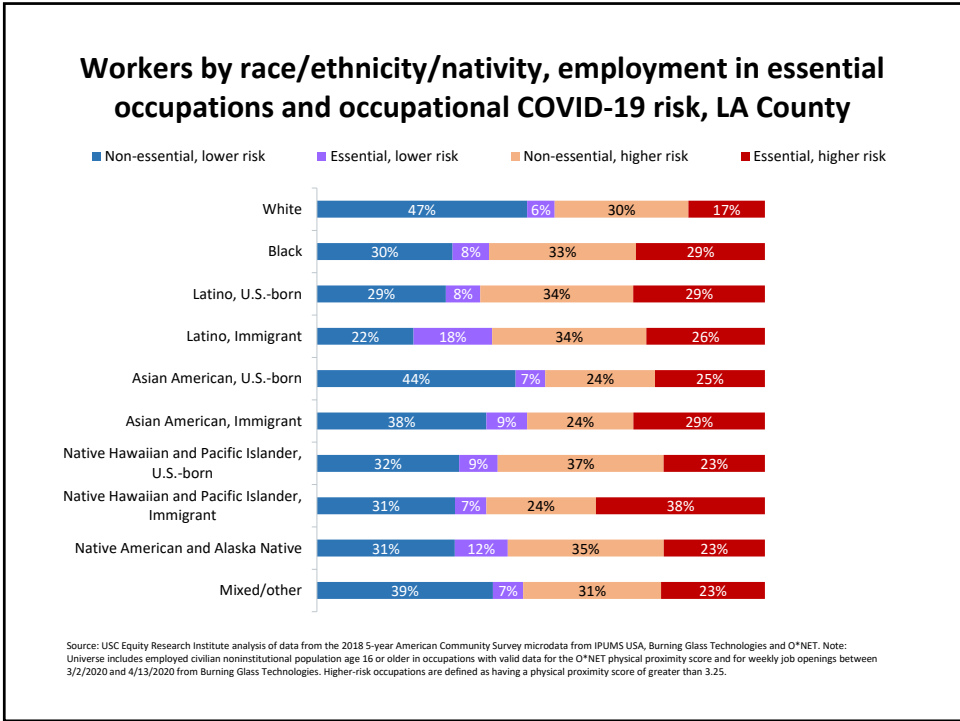
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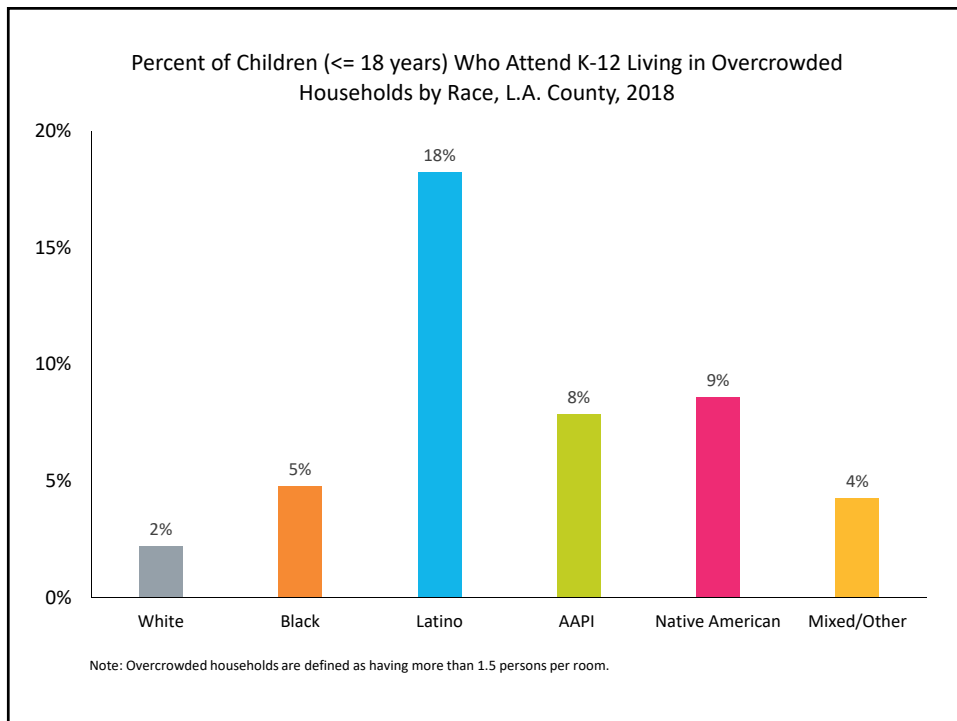
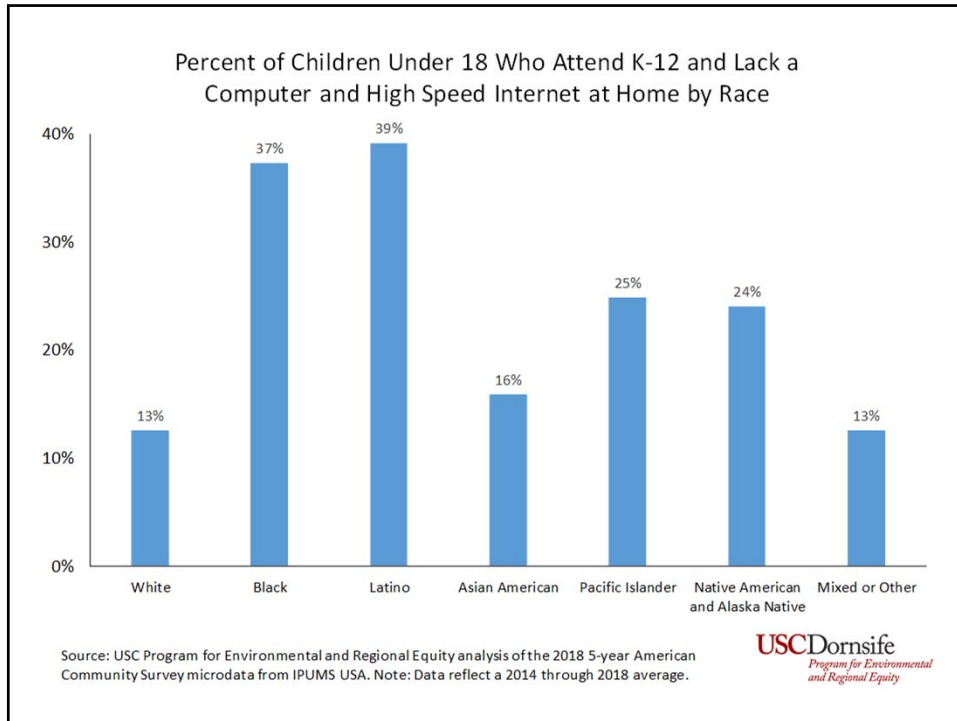
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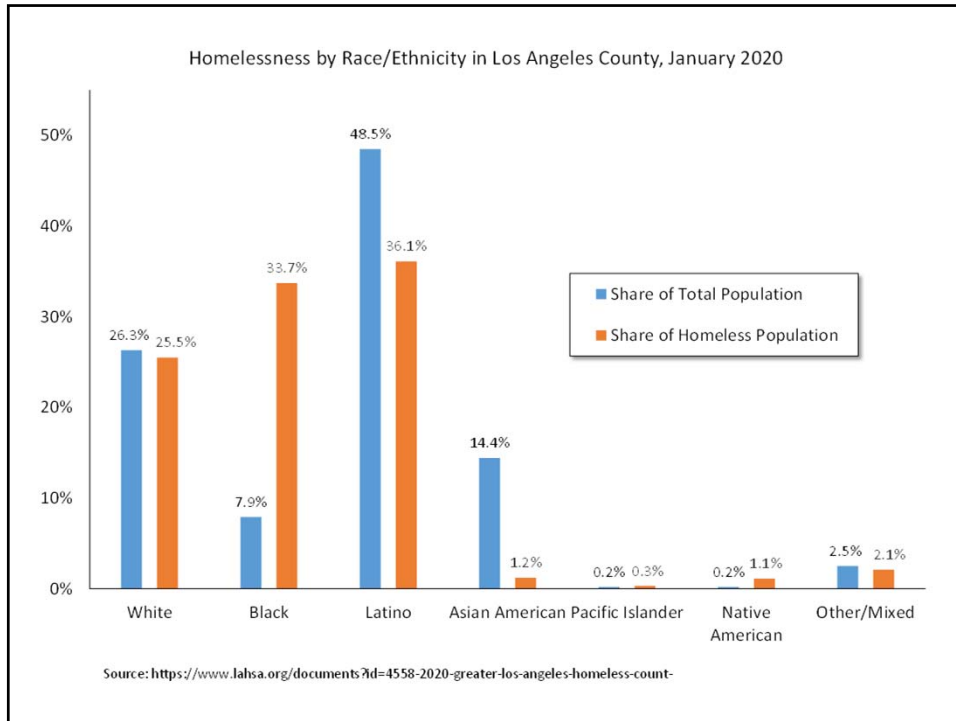












No going back to a “normal” that didn’t work and left so many vulnerable to the pandemic and systemic inequality

But what’s different this time?

- A national and local reckoning with racism
- An understanding of the power of mutuality
- Sophisticated community & non-profit infrastructure

Ten Important Principles for a Reinvention of Los Angeles

- 1** **Address anti-Black racism in all its forms.**
Statistic after statistic on homelessness, education, family wealth, health and well-being, and the criminal justice system show ample evidence of the systemic racism impacting Black Angelenos. Leaders must be committed to understanding the history that has produced these outcomes and devoted to making progress on an anti-racist agenda.
- 2** **Build an economy that prioritizes those who have been left or kept behind.**
Business can be a force for good in this arena, particularly by shifting hiring and opening up procurement systems to businesses owned by people of color. But there is also a need to protect workers, promote a "caring economy," address long-standing racial disparities in labor markets, overcome discrimination against the disabled, and insure affordable digital access for all.
- 3** **Support the health of communities and individuals living with the trauma of systemic neglect and oppression.**
This requires a combination of community-based care and attention to insuring sufficient reimbursement for providers serving the least advantaged. Mental health systems should promote healing and also empower communities to press for change in the systems that cause hurt. Everyone should be able to connect to health and mental health services, regardless of status.
- 4** **Create housing for all and end unsheltered homelessness**
Black people are about eight percent of the County population but a full third of those who are homeless. The COVID crisis has worsened already existing housing insecurity, with many an eviction away from the streets. Change will require that the scale of the response reflect the scale of the crisis, that we tackle the legacies and realities of structural racism, and that the region as a whole take action and hold these structures accountable.
- 5** **Insure access, mobility, and voice for immigrants regardless of status.**
We need disaster relief that can get to all Angelenos, we need a right to work which does not depend on documentation, and we need small business promotion that includes firms owned by Black, indigenous, and immigrant entrepreneurs. Political systems should open to include local voting by non-citizens and we need an aggressive campaign to naturalize all who are eligible.
- 6** **Support education access for all children and all communities.**
In the current situation, that means closing the digital divide, securing remote access for all families, and taking special steps to address the learning loss that has occurred in this period of disconnection. More broadly, we need an equity-oriented and anti-racist student performance framework that addresses community-based disparities.
- 7** **Celebrate and support youth leadership and empowerment.**
Youth who have intersectional identities of race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity experience discriminatory disciplinary responses in education, child welfare, and juvenile justice. Changing this will require investments in youth leadership to challenge systems as well as training to insure employment and entrepreneurship.
- 8** **Strengthen the non-profit sector as a key part of civil society.**
Local philanthropy has stepped in to provide emergency support for non-profits who provide service and promote leadership but this cannot be a one-time infusion. Ensuring resources, harmonizing application and reporting requirement, providing multi-year funding, and supporting less visible sectors, like organizations supporting Native Americans, will all be critical.
- 9** **Build community power and develop accompanying metrics to hold systems accountable.**
Those who are closest to the problem are closest to the solution - but they are often furthest from the power needed to impact public policy. We need to support youth and community organizing, develop and deploy metrics that can measure progress on racial equity, and hold systems accountable to performance not promises.
- 10** **Align business, community, philanthropy, and government for equity.**
Justice is everyone's business and we need more effective and integrated governance structures and data and information sharing across systems. But we also need a new sense of public will that what was once deemed politically unfeasible - reducing police budgets, achieving digital equality, and investing fully in education - is now imperative.

POLICY ARENAS & RECOMMENDATIONS

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Unemployment, Underemployment, & Economic Stress | 9. Family and Child Well-being |  |
| 2. Black Lives in Los Angeles | 10. Educational Access During COVID and Beyond | |
| 3. Immigration Policy and Immigrant Struggles | 11. Youth From All Communities |  |
| 4. Housing Affordability in Los Angeles | 12. Incarcerated and Re-Entry Populations | |
| 5. Homelessness | 13. Transportation |  |
| 6. Health Care Access | 14. The Non-Profit and Philanthropic Response | |
| 7. Health Care Among Communities with Co-Morbidities | 15. Internet as a Civil Right | |
| 8. Mental Health | | |

ECONOMIC STRESS

PROBLEM: Persistent economic inequities were present prior to the current crisis: high wage inequality, unevenly distributed housing burden; less worker power, and constrained upward mobility. With COVID-19, younger people, women, and people of color particularly African Americans, were the hardest hit groups for unemployment, lack of health insurance, and more, and are at higher risk of negative consequences of ongoing economic crisis.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL:

- Build an economy that prioritizes those who have been left behind, particularly low-income Black, indigenous, and communities of color.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Protect workers (e.g., increase wages, insure paid sick leave and secure schedule stability for essential workers; expand UI Benefits and eligibility).
- Invest in mutually beneficial initiatives that redress chronic community conditions and grow the economy (e.g., high-speed connectivity).
- Support businesses owned by people of color and women.
- Encourage businesses to recruit, hire and promote people of color
- Reform our revenue base.

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BLACK LIFE

PROBLEM: Black Angelenos have long been plagued by lagging incomes, disproportionate unemployment, stripped of wealth and savings by years of discriminatory real estate practices and the racial disparate impact of the Great Recession's foreclosure crisis. The ongoing racial disparities constituted a set of pre-existing conditions making Black Angelenos vulnerable to a global pandemic, leading to death rates double that of white Angelenos; and higher concentrations of essential workers and seniors living alone, furthering risks.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL:

- Address anti-Black racism in all its forms.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Insure safety in public and private space, through actions such as passing and implementing the Breathe Act and decriminalizing poverty and homelessness.
- Create systems of care that address systematic racism (e.g. in health and mental health care and access to affordable and nutritional food).
- Evolve to a economy of solidarity that generates Black wealth.
- Support and Invest in Black led organizations that are already doing work.
- Commission a report on the state of Black lives in Los Angeles.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

PROBLEM: The ongoing failure to provide adequate affordable housing for all Angelenos builds upon historic intentional discrimination and unconstitutional federal housing policies that have resulted in unequal access to housing and property rights for communities of color. The pandemic has resulted in ever increasing numbers of people who are on the brink of not being able to pay for their housing costs and basic necessities, and becoming vulnerable to experiencing homelessness.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL: We must work to ensure to keep all housed Angelenos in their homes and address long-standing policies and practices that make the supply of affordable housing for working class Angelenos insufficient.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS: CENTER RACIAL EQUITY

Immediate Term:

1. Extend Eviction Moratoria and Strengthen Tenant Protections
2. Provide Rental Assistance Prioritizing Most Vulnerable Tenants.

Medium Term:

3. Rental Market Stabilization Program
4. Public Acquisition of Hotels and Motels for Conversion into Permanent Supportive Housing
5. Property Acquisition and Land Banking for Affordable Housing Development

Long Term:

6. Generate Revenue from New Sources for construction of affordable housing
7. Streamline the Development Process and Remove Barriers to Achieve 500,000 New Units;
8. Restructure Governance and Implement Meaningful Regional Accountability

ENDING HOMELESSNESS

PROBLEM: More than 60,000 Angelenos lack a permanent place to live. Unhoused and unsheltered persons face a host of perils resulting in shorter life spans and unbearable daily lives. Because of COVID and its economic effects, that number may grow precipitously.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL: End unsheltered homelessness in LA County and ensure that every person has a home they can afford in their community.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

Immediate—Stop the Bleeding through emergency use of land and buildings not in use, rent and mortgage relief. No one temporarily housed returns to the street;

Short Term—Turn the Tide using Project Homekey to increase acquisitions, streamline processes and begin anti-racist rezoning work, fully implement the recommendations and work of the Ad Hoc on Black Persons Experiencing Homelessness, secure additional resources to fund solutions at the scale of need, and incentivize private investment;

Long Term—Assure accountability at every Level by establishing/designating a regional centralized agency creating accountability; every local government has a plan to build 25% of their very low-income RHNA number as PSH, re-start the national campaign to end American homelessness, and double Section 8 housing vouchers.

HEALTH CARE ACCESS

PROBLEM: The low income and working class communities of Los Angeles were, and are, disadvantaged by a series of structural disadvantages in the healthcare system which limit their access to care, its quality, and its effectiveness. The COVID pandemic has made matters worse, and disproportionately affected communities of color with shockingly higher infection and mortality rates in Los Angeles County.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL: All residents of California, regardless of citizenship or immigration status, must enjoy cradle to grave core health care access at a rate they can afford from culturally competent providers. Health care is a human right.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Universal healthcare access achieved either through Statewide Single Payer, MediCal Expansion, and/or the expansion of Covered California;
- Increase Medi-Cal payments to the same level as Medicare;
- Pay more for outpatient care, disease management and population health (and not just to FQHCs);
- Integrate funding and delivery of medical and behavioral health care, and fund mental health care at the same rate as physical healthcare;
- Reduce barriers and increase payments for telehealth services;
- Provide more equitable funding for graduate medical education that does not privilege providers servicing middle class and older patients.

HEALTH CARE INTERVENTIONS

PROBLEM: The social determinants of health, reinforced through historic and ongoing systemic racism, result in poorer health overall and the likely presence of other chronic health challenges. Communities of color and LGBTQ populations were more likely to have pre-existing co-morbidities that worsen COVID outcomes. Prohibitive Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rules, combined with the difficulty of navigating prescribing laws and regulations at the federal and state levels, has been particularly burdensome for the FQHCs .

BRIGHTLINE GOAL: Prevent the pandemic from worsening health disparities and ensure access to critical services for communities with longstanding disadvantages and/or serious co-morbidities.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Preserve community health centers by mitigating impact of lost revenue for FQHCs and FQHC-look-alikes, ensuring adequate supply of PPE and other tools, and interest-free loans to private service providers/clinics hard hit by COVID shutdowns, like substance use treatment facilities.
- Enable the transition to remote care or “telehealth” by investing in technology and skills, and promote the adoption of video services to assist those that serve patients with substance use, such as buprenorphine prescribers and therapists.
- Mitigate the direct impact of the novel coronavirus on marginalized communities by improving testing capacity and access.

MENTAL HEALTH

PROBLEM: Nearly one in six Californians experience some form of mental illness and one out of every 24 California residents have a mental illness so serious it becomes difficult for them to function in daily life. Most Californians also believe that treatment is not widely available, and nearly two-thirds of adults with a mental illness did not receive mental health services due to barriers ranging from personal stigma to systemic lack of access.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL: We must create a new vision for well-being, which includes culturally responsive interventions to improve wellbeing at individual and community levels within all community ecosystems, and a preventative model with a person-centered approach to assess and support the whole person within their environment.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Mental Health Funding Parity;
- Addressing the critical inequities in basic human needs, including safety, employment, housing, and opportunity;
- Broad and inclusive Mental Health and Wellbeing Education;
- Public/Private Partnerships to advance research, treatment and prevention;
- Building a Community Ambassador Network of mental health promoters.

EDUCATION

PROBLEM: Even before the pandemic, educational institutions were failing to meet the needs of vulnerable K-12 students in Los Angeles, as demonstrated by long-standing gaps in achievement and graduation rates. Now, the Covid-19 crisis has amplified preexisting disparities in educational outcomes which exist along stark racial and class lines. Race predicts graduation rates, drop-out patterns, chronic absenteeism, and standardized assessment scores.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL: Every student—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, language, disability, family income, or zip code—must feel supported and have access to a high-quality education.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Support students, families, and school staff during remote instruction;
- Support equity-based funding policies;
- Focus on cultural competency;
- Engage parents and students in decision-making;
- Expand the Community Schools model where schools serve as hubs for families.

INTERNET AS A CIVIL RIGHT

PROBLEM: Uneven access to broadband in an easy and reliable fashion serves to thwart full participation in the economy, the society, the job market, commerce, governance, and the information environment.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL: Properly understood, full and functional access to the internet is a civil rights issue. We must have broadband access on a fully functional device in every household in Los Angeles.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The City, County, and State should make a policy commitment to 100% meaningful and usable broadband web access in five years' time.
- Broadband service made available to every household through expansion of existing Lifeline subsidy and an infusion of state and local resources.
- The provision of every school-child in California with a moderate to low cost device to provide functional access to the web and its resources from home.
- Investment of state-level funds to provide a means-tested voucher for the purchase of cost-efficient equipment for households w/o school aged children.

CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

PROBLEM: Los Angeles' current systems of care do not serve the needs of the Black, Brown and Indigenous families of color. COVID has exposed structural obstacles to family supervision and child protection during a health emergency. Prevention models and community-based care are our best tools to connect the highest need families to resources and mitigate risk to Black foster youth.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL: Creating networks of support, protection, and mutual assistance that will lower the need for government, CPS, and law enforcement intervention and, when that intervention is necessary, makes sure that it is timely.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Initiate community-led process to design and implement localized prevention support systems which may include family resource centers
- Disentangle poverty from genuine neglect and address the former rather than seek to punish the latter.
- Develop cohorts of Community Health Workers who could significantly expand the reach and capacity of current systems to support prevention.
- Support for mutual-aid and community based models of prevention, support, and early intervention.

YOUTH

PROBLEM: Youth have been living at the margins, experiencing social inequities without many official avenues to decision-making processes. The rising costs of higher education, housing, lack of access to health/mental health services and living wages, and the challenges of criminalization, are further marginalizing youth of color, and in particular, Black youth. COVID-19 has left large numbers unemployed, and many others, or their family members, working as essential workers, putting them at further risk.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL:

- L.A. County must celebrate and support youth leadership and empowerment.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Boost programs and services and shift funding from punitive juvenile systems to supportive services, youth centers, youth programming, etc.
- Develop economic opportunities for youth.
- Incorporate elements of youth organizing to school curriculums and other youth serving programs, and invest in it.
- Incorporate youth councils in every form of government, and lower the voting age to 16.
- Invest in youth data collection to understand needs and better support them.

IMMIGRANTS

PROBLEM: Harsh immigration policies and enforcement threaten the health and well-being of immigrants. COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on immigrant communities, due to racial discrimination, financial hardship, language barriers, and fear of deportation; and they have been left out of federal stimulus dollars.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL:

- L.A County must commit to insure accessibility, mobility, and voice for immigrants regardless of status.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Implement De Facto county citizenship.
- Open up social and health services to every Californian regardless of status.
- Promote access to capital for street vendors and small businesses.
- Expand universal Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) and CalFresh to immigrants regardless of status
- Provide access to legal resources and representation.

INCARCERATION

PROBLEM: Los Angeles jails house over 20,000 people on average in the largest jail system in the world. Nearly half of the jail population is detained awaiting trial. People detained pretrial are separated from home and risk losing employment, housing, and, in many cases, children while in detention. Many in lock-up manifest mental health challenges better addressed elsewhere. Even more were unhoused at the time of arrest.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL: Transition and investment in permanent alternatives to incarceration.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Reform bail practices that unnecessarily incarcerate the poor awaiting trial.
- Expand and scale community-based, holistic care, and services including housing and reentry planning.
- Utilize mental health professionals and social workers to provide mental health interventions for individuals experiencing mental health and/or substance use disorders with *minimal* involvement from law enforcement.
- Provide effective treatment in a community-based setting instead of jail time.
- Permanently allocate funds to alternative practices such as rental assistance, youth organizing, and restorative justice.
- Enforce the detention center ban and strengthen refusals to participate with any federal efforts.

TRANSPORTATION

PROBLEM: Despite advocacy of mass transit, we continue to incentivize the reliance on vehicles through our infrastructure investments, a situation made worse by COVID. Yet the noneconomic costs of an automobile-oriented transportation system fall disproportionately on low-income families and communities of color.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL: People—of every age, ability, income, zip code, race, and ethnicity—should be able to easily access their basic transportation needs. Public transit should be *public*, regardless of ability to pay. Active transportation infrastructure including vehicular alternatives should be accessible to all, designed especially with the needs of the disabled and the elderly in mind.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Create participatory structures of transportation planning that include low income communities in thinking through the provision of transportation options.
- Work for equity in transportation including equity in opportunities for non-vehicular transport to working class communities and people of color.
- Fill funding gaps for mass transit and consider congestion or toll lanes to redirect revenue to safe, clean, and faster mass transit options.
- Revisit Parking Policies with the intention of lowering barriers to affordable housing development and growth and eliminating incentives to single-occupancy vehicles, with their environmental consequences.

NON-PROFIT SECTOR

PROBLEM: Non-profits have played a crucial role in providing essential services to the most marginalized populations, and governments often rely on this sector to deliver critical public services. Resource disparities in the non-profit sector have been evident. With COVID-19, the sector is now at a breaking point with revenue losses from cancelled events, the need to shift service delivery, and fears of closures for the smaller organizations.

BRIGHTLINE GOAL:

- L.A. County must strengthen the non-profit sector as a key part of civil society in the recovery.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Invest in transforming community power and wealth, to target resources for services and toward structurally addressing the inherent social, political and economic contradictions exposed by this crisis.
- Make transformative investments in BIPOC-led and serving non-profits dedicated to dismantling systemic racism.
- Invest in and build the capacity of Native and indigenous-led groups.
- Understand and fund the full costs associated with effective non-profit service delivery.

**This moment begs
of us to create
something better.**



**We cannot go back to a
past that never really
worked; we must move
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Thanks to our funders:

- **Annenberg Foundation**
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