



CITY OF BALDWIN PARK

Press Release

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City of Baldwin Park Receives Helen Putnam Award for Excellence for Successful Homeless Initiatives

BALDWIN PARK, CA — The City of Baldwin Park is proud to announce that it has received the prestigious Helen Putnam Award for Excellence in the Housing Programs and Innovations category from the [League of California Cities](#).

The award, presented to City staff on Oct. 9 at the [Cal Cities Annual Conference in Long Beach](#), recognizes the groundbreaking success of [Baldwin Park's Esperanza Villa and Serenity Homes "interim housing" facilities](#). Since opening in 2021 and 2022, these facilities have played a key role in Baldwin Park achieving a remarkable 80% reduction in homelessness.

"This award is a powerful affirmation of what Baldwin Park stands for: compassion, innovation and community," said Baldwin Park Mayor Alejandra Avila. "Our city chose to believe that homelessness could be addressed with dignity and humanity, and that belief has changed lives. The Helen Putnam Award recognizes the tireless efforts of our staff, our partners and our residents who refused to accept that homelessness was unsolvable. Together, we've built a model of hope for cities across California."

The [Helen Putnam Award for Excellence](#) is California's premier recognition program for local government innovation, honoring cities that demonstrate outstanding leadership in addressing critical community challenges. Baldwin Park's Homeless Reduction Initiative stood out among submissions statewide for its comprehensive approach to reducing unsheltered homelessness through dignified, individual and family-centered bridge housing.

Since launching Esperanza Villa in November 2021 and Serenity Homes in September 2022, Baldwin Park has experienced an 80% reduction in homelessness over five years, from 556 individuals in 2020 to 108 in 2025. The two complementary facilities serve distinct populations with tailored approaches: Esperanza Villa provides 25 units for adult individuals with 90-day stays, while Serenity Homes offers 16 family-focused units designed to keep families together during their 3-6 month transition period.

The City's innovative "interim housing" model provides residents with private, climate-controlled units complete with locking doors, full-size beds and furnishings, addressing traditional barriers to shelter by offering dignity, safety and privacy. Both facilities feature ADA-compliant spaces, multilingual services and culturally competent staff to serve Baldwin Park's diverse community.

Pet-friendly policies ensure individuals and families aren't forced to choose between shelter and their beloved animals, while dedicated children's spaces at Serenity Homes help young residents maintain educational progress and healthy development. On-site computer facilities enable residents to continue their education and job searches, and comprehensive case management services are provided through partnership with City Net to support each resident's journey toward permanent housing.

This recognition follows the City's receipt of the [2025 Southern California Association of Governments Sustainability Award for Outstanding Achievement in Sustainability](#), the program's highest honor category, which also celebrated Baldwin Park's Homeless Reduction Initiative for its innovative approach to building sustainable, community-driven solutions.

The success of Baldwin Park's program has attracted representatives from over 40 cities seeking to replicate the model and has earned coverage from major media outlets such as ABC 7 News, the *San Gabriel Valley Tribune* and Spectrum News 1.

"Baldwin Park's achievements reflect what can happen when every part of local government works toward a shared purpose," said Mayor Alejandra Avila. "Our departments, staff and partners collaborated relentlessly to build programs that treat every person with dignity while delivering measurable, lasting results. This is the kind of work that defines who we are as a city."

The City extends its deep appreciation to key partners in the initiative, including Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, City Net, San Gabriel Valley Regional Housing Trust, San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, County of Los Angeles Homeless Initiative, Cities and Councils of Governments Interim Housing Services and the San Gabriel Valley Consortium on Homelessness, along with numerous other public and private sector collaborators.

For more information about Baldwin Park's Homeless Reduction Initiative, please visit the [City's website](#).

About the City of Baldwin Park:

Baldwin Park is a nearly seven-square-mile, suburban community of 72,000 residents in the heart of the San Gabriel Valley. As the hub of the San Gabriel Valley, Baldwin Park is known for its ease of access and mobility, young and diverse residents and vibrant, growing business community. For more information, visit baldwinpark.com or follow Baldwin Park on Facebook (@BaldwinParkCAGov), Instagram (BaldwinPark_CAGov) and Twitter (BaldwinParkCA_).