



Lamp Lodge: Permanent Supportive Housing in the Lamp Community

Lamp Lodge is a 48-unit permanent supportive housing project for homeless single adults with severe mental illness. The project, built in 1991, is located in downtown Los Angeles and is a component in Lamp Community's array of services for homeless people. It is this "wrap-around" of additional services and housing options provided by one organization which makes Lamp Lodge a promising practice in supportive housing.

Also available is a profile on the [Lamp Community](#), a [photo tour](#) of Lamp Lodge, and a [sample lease](#).

Owner

Lamp Lodge is run by Lamp Community, a social service and housing provider for homeless people which operates exclusively in the Central City East area of downtown Los Angeles. Lamp Community offers a wide range of support services and housing with the goal of creating a lifelong community where homeless persons with severe mental illness can find a sense of belonging and improve their well-being.

Building

Lamp Lodge is located in the Central City East area of downtown Los Angeles, generally referred to as "Skid Row," a forty square block area where there is a high concentration of homeless individuals. The Lodge is a three story, 25,000 square foot apartment building rehabilitated in 1991 to create 48 rental units (41 efficiencies and 7 one-bedroom) plus case management space and an efficiency management staff apartment.

In 1991 Lamp Lodge was the first building on Skid Row in which every apartment was equipped with its own kitchen and bathroom. Almost all other housing in the neighborhood consist of single room occupancy (SRO) hotel units in which tenants share a common kitchen and bath. Providing private kitchens and bathrooms significantly improves tenant attitudes toward sense of ownership, belonging, privacy, and permanency.

Lamp Lodge has one large community room where tenants can rest on oversized couches, eat or play games at scattered tables, and watch television. From the community room, tenants can access a long center courtyard to enjoy some time outside that is removed from the streets of Skid Row. In the courtyard, tenants gather to talk, sit together on the bench, and share a cigarette. Tenants also care for plants here, which add beauty to a space that is mostly concrete.

Lamp Lodge has two case management offices for individual meetings with tenants and a large community room for tenant activities or support group meetings.

Services

Lamp Lodge has on-site a property manager, assistant manager, weekend activities person, and two case managers who work exclusively with the forty-nine tenants of the building.

All services and property management at Lamp Lodge are coordinated, with Lamp Community's housing director being responsible for both services and property management. Lamp has found this way of managing all staff who interact with residents extremely valuable for providing continuity of message and approach. [Editor's Note: Many supportive housing providers find it useful to have a clear distinction between the services team and property management. For more on this issue, please see [Not a Solo Act](#)].

Lamp Lodge tenants take advantage of the broader range of services provided by [Lamp Community](#). Services and programs include case management, a meals program, job training and employment programs, art programs, mental health counseling, and addiction care and counseling. Lamp Lodge receives housing referrals from the other components of the Lamp Community (i.e. transitional programs, a day center, and a residential treatment program).

Ninety-nine percent of the tenants who have moved into Lamp Lodge have a long-term history of homelessness. Many of the tenants have been "screened out" of other housing and service programs due to their unstable mental health or their substance use.

Capital Financing

In 1991 the purchase and rehabilitation of the Lamp Lodge cost \$2,238,080, and was financed and subsidized by a combination of sources:

- \$1,000,000 (3% interest, 30 year) deferred payment loan from the "California Housing Rehabilitation Program – Rental Component" (CHRP-R). This loan is administered by the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development;
- \$1,163,080 (3% interest, 30 year) deferred payment loan from the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles;
- \$75,000 grant from Africa-USA.

Lessons Learned

For lessons learned at Lamp Lodge and in the broader Lamp Community, please see the [Lamp Community Profile](#).