UCLA

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DH M121: Race, Gender, and Data Systemically Unhoused

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Meet Our Team!

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Research Question

How have unhoused populations varied across Los Angeles neighborhoods from 2017 to 2022?

What demographic factors contribute to disparities in homelessness within these populations?

Observation of Homelessness While Living in LA and Personal Ties

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Using Data to Research Trends on Homelessness
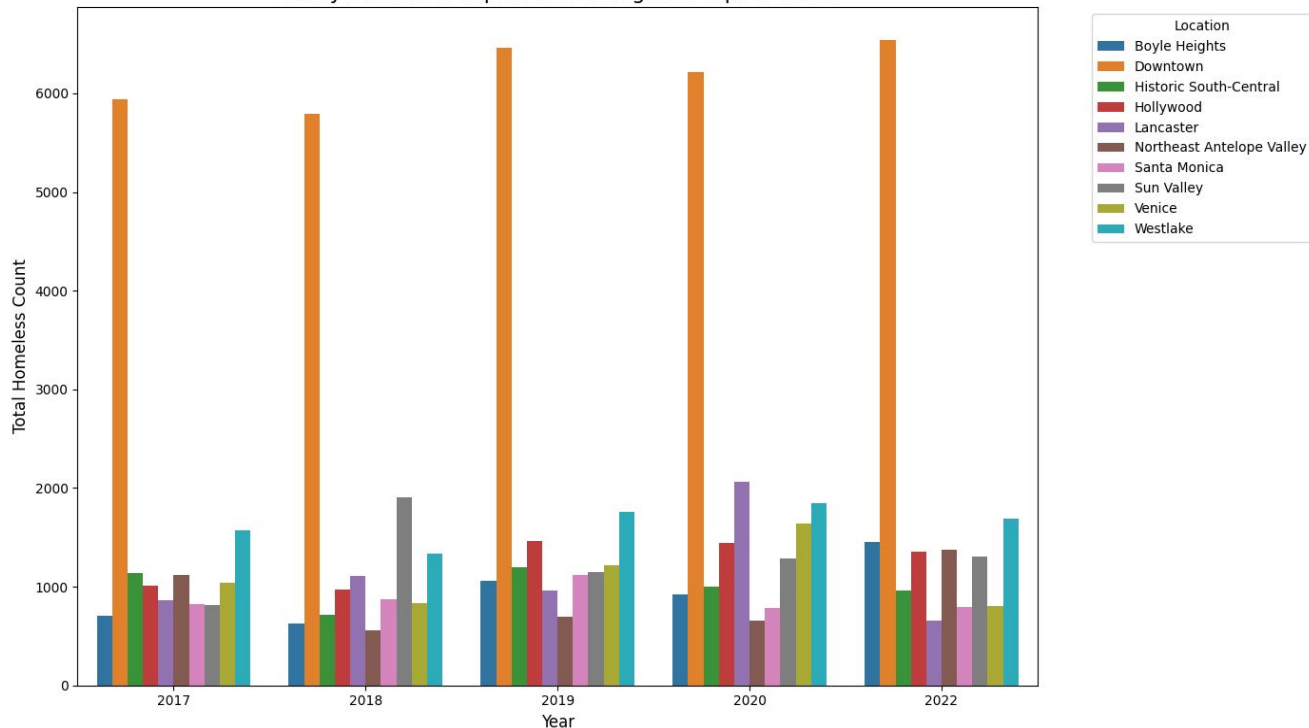
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Areas of Focus When Considering Houselessness

Scope

Causes

Dynamics

Data Visualizations

Yearly Homeless Population Changes in Top LA Cities

- This bar chart shows yearly changes in the homeless population (2017-2022, excluding 2021).

- Highlights neighborhoods with the highest and lowest homeless populations. Downtown leads with the largest homeless population.

- This visualization indicates areas with the greatest need and service allocation over time.

Distribution of Gender Categories from 2017 to 2022
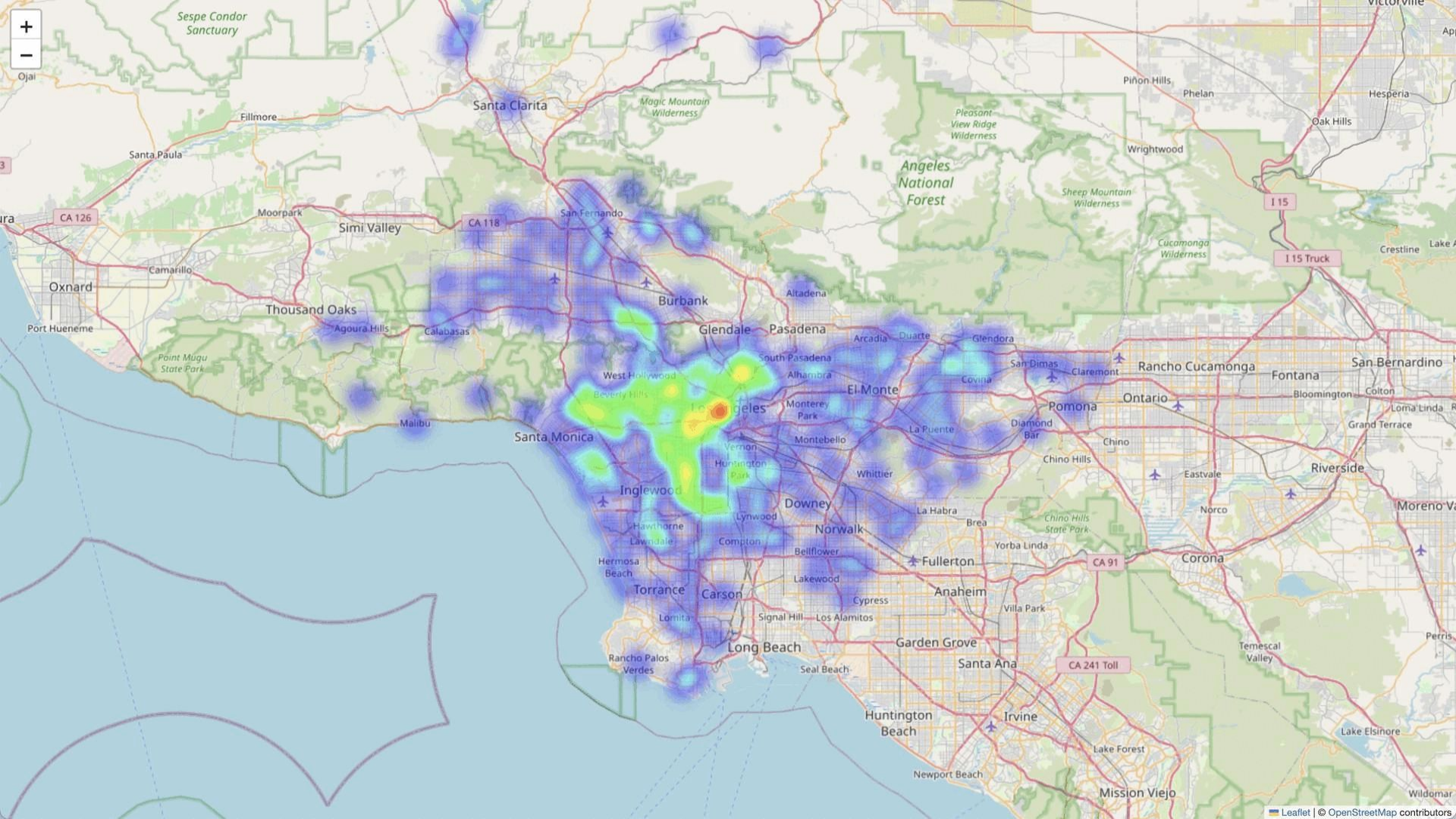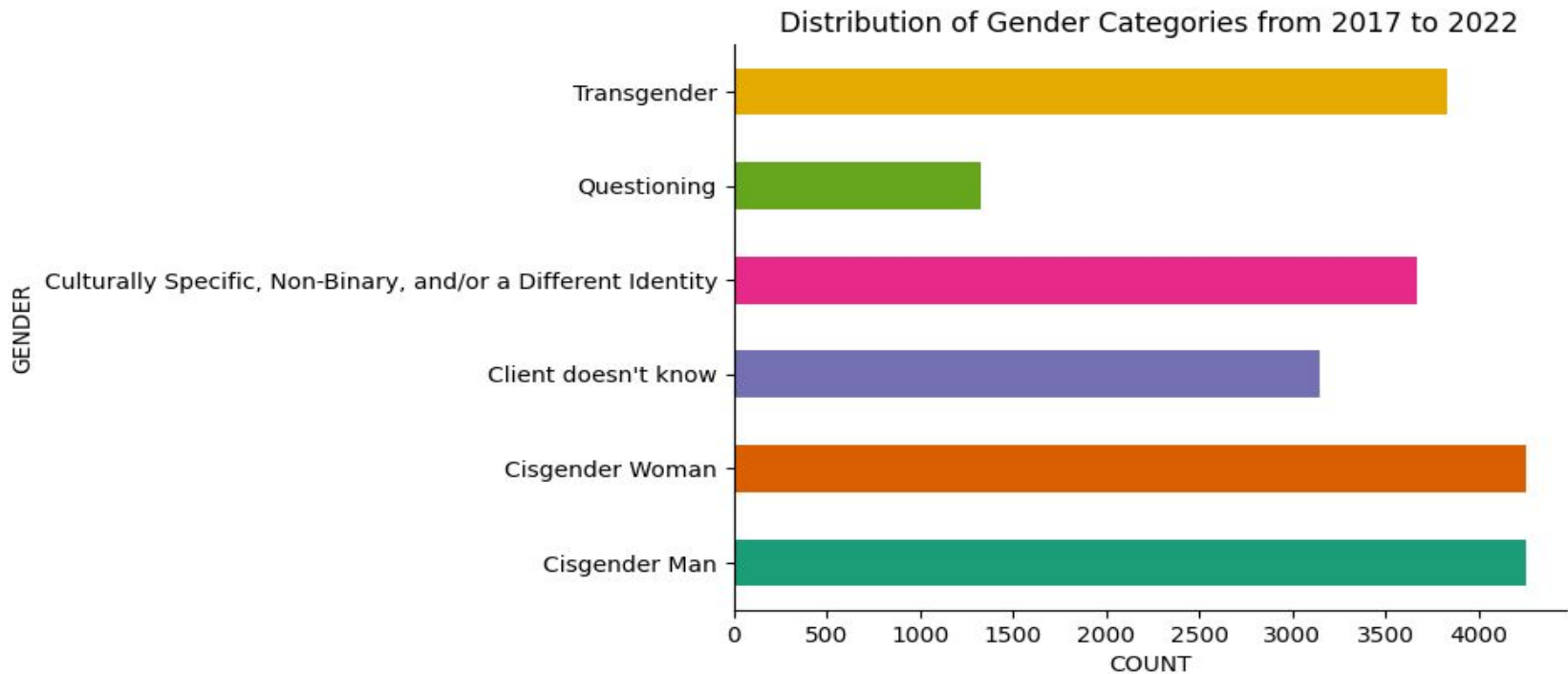
- This graph highlights the distribution of individuals across gender categories (2017–2022).

- Cisgender Men and Women are the largest groups (over 4,000 each).

- Questioning is the smallest group with significantly fewer individuals.

- This visualization provides insights into demographics influencing service distribution trends.

Distribution of Races from 2017 to 2022
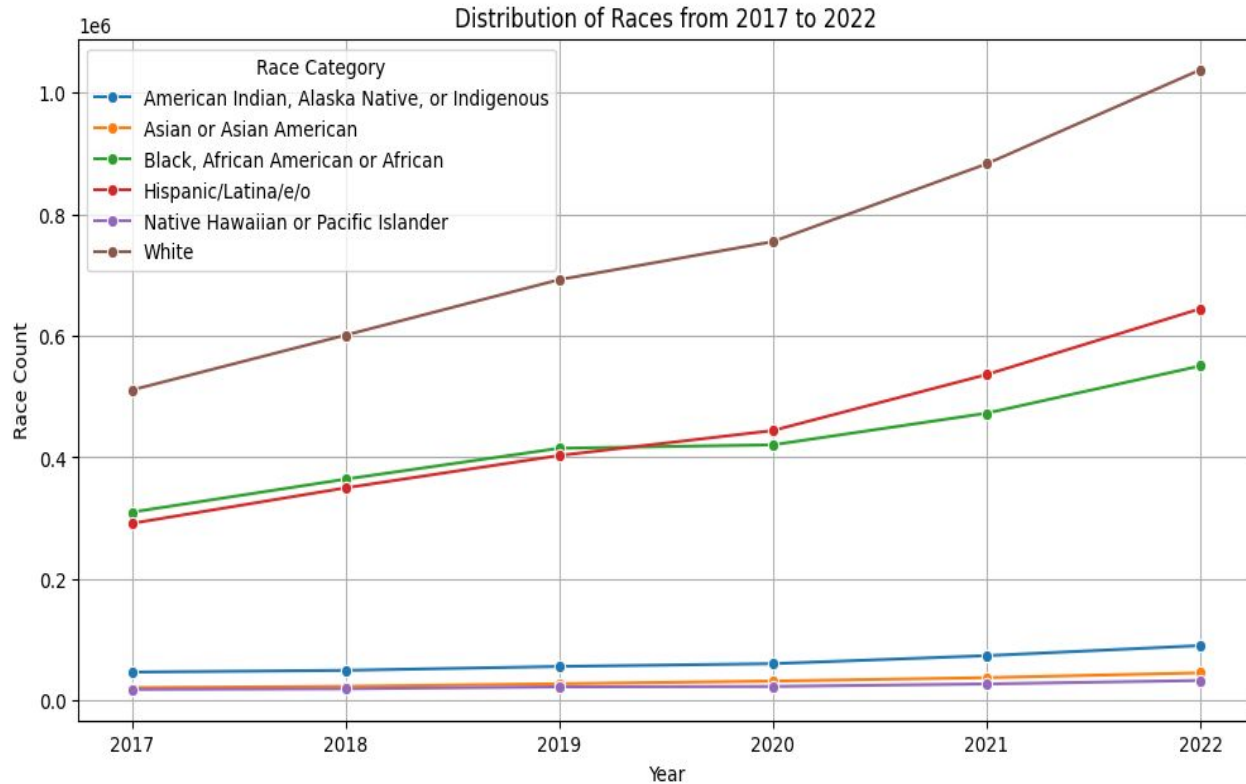
- White individuals are the largest racial group experiencing homelessness.
- **Black and Hispanic** populations are the second and third largest groups by 2022.
- **Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian** populations remain the smallest groups with minimal growth.
- Homelessness consistently increased across all racial categories (2017–2022).
- Highlights disparities between **White and smaller racial groups**, showing uneven impacts.

Datasets and Process

Tools and Platforms

- **Jupyter Notebook/Google Colab**: used for data analysis and visualization.
- **Python**: primary programming language for data processing and analysis.
- **Zoom, Google Drive, and Slides**: utilized for communication, collaboration, and presentation.

Datasets

1. **Homelessness Demographics by Race and Gender**
   - A merged dataset from California's open data portal providing homelessness counts categorized by race and gender from 2017 to 2022. *California Interagency Council on Homelessness (*Cal ICH*)*
2. **LA Homeless Population**
   - A dataset by the *Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority* (**LAHSA**) and *USC Lusk Neighborhood Data for Social Change (*NDSC*)* summarizing homelessness counts across Los Angeles County for 2017–2022, excluding 2021 due to COVID-19.

Policy Context

- **Housing First**
  - A policy focused on providing housing quickly, alongside services aimed at improving well-being.

What We Learned

Technical Skills:

- Data analysis & visualization via Python & Jupyter Notebook/Google Colab.
- Geospatial mapping with Folium to interpret unhoused trends.
- Aggregating and cleaning large datasets from multiple sources (HDIS, CoC).

Interpersonal and Teamwork Skills:

- Effective team collaboration and communication through Zoom, messaging platforms, and Google Workspace.
- Problem-solving and adaptability in handling data inconsistencies and challenges.
- Leveraging individual strengths to achieve group goals.
- Insightful discussions to connect quantitative data with real-world contexts.

Interactive Mapping Exercise

1. **Scan the QR Code**
   - Use your phone or device to scan the QR code provided.
     This will take you to the interactive map displaying homelessness data for LA cities.

2. **Group Activity**
   - Each group has been assigned a specific neighborhood to analyze:
     - **Policing Group**: Explore **Compton** in South LA.
     - **Reproductive Justice Group**: Explore **Arcadia** in the San Gabriel Valley.
     - **Poverty Group**: Explore **Santa Monica** in West LA.
   - Discuss and answer the following within your group:
     - Is the homeless count in your assigned neighborhood consistently high, low, or fluctuating over the years (2017–2022, excluding 2021 due to the pandemic)?
     - What factors might explain the trends in this neighborhood?
   Consider policy changes, demographic shifts, or geographic influences.

3. **Prepare an Observation**
   - As a group, prepare one **key observation** about your assigned city.
     Be ready to share:
     - The trend you observed.
     - A possible explanation for this trend.

4. **Share and Discuss**
   - After five minutes, each group will briefly share their observation with the class.
   - After all groups have shared their thoughts, we will discuss common themes and how these trends relate to disparities in homeless response services across cities.


EPIC TIMERS
5:00
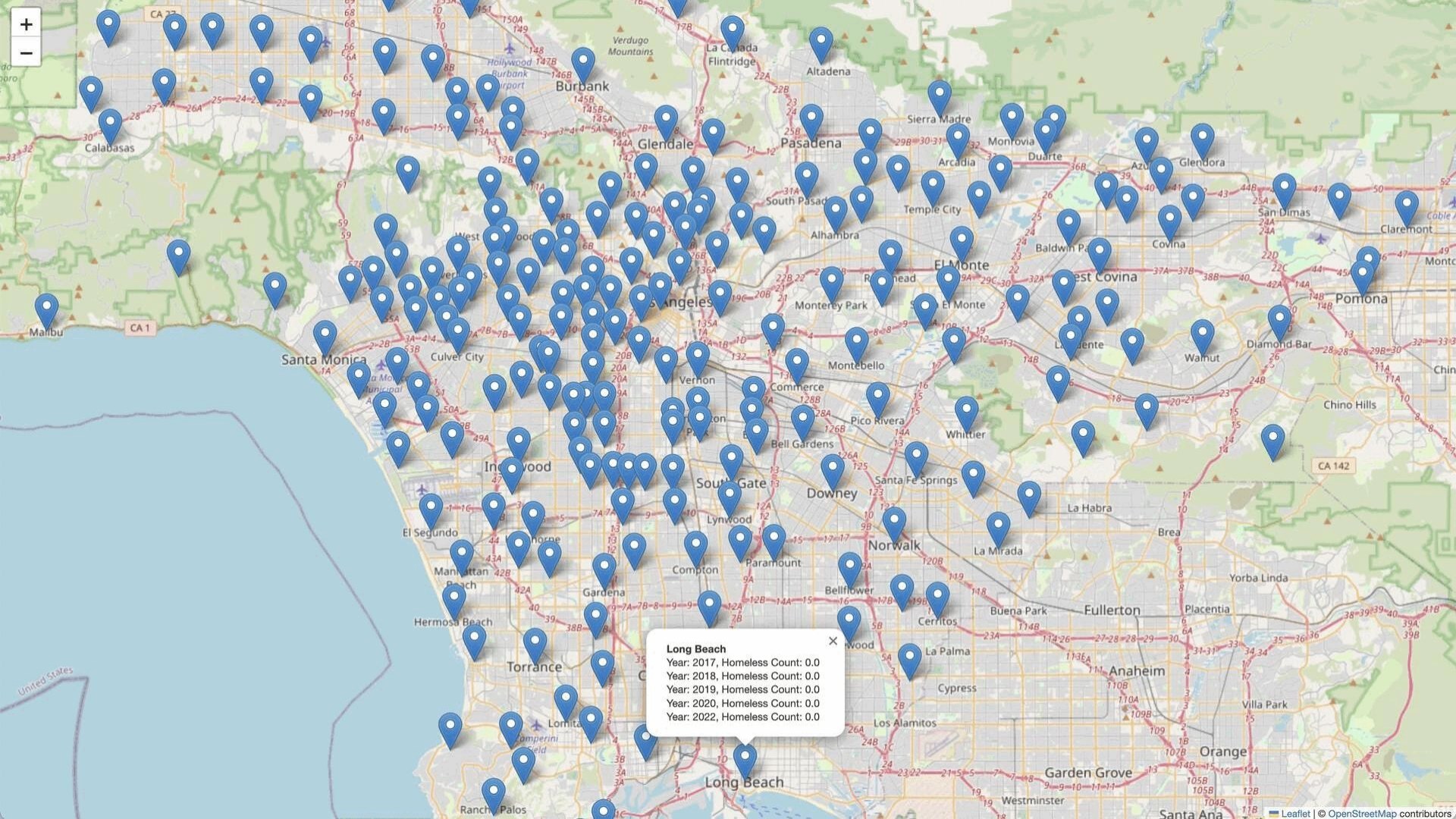
Long Beach
Year: 2017, Homeless Count: 0.0
Year: 2018, Homeless Count: 0.0
Year: 2019, Homeless Count: 0.0
Year: 2020, Homeless Count: 0.0
Year: 2022, Homeless Count: 0.0

Leaflet | © OpenStreetMap contributors

Future Directions

- **Deepen Demographic Analysis**:
  Examine intersections of race, gender, and age with service disparities.
- **Policy Impact Study**:
  Investigate the long-term effects of "Housing First" policies on service allocation.
- **Community Engagement**:
  Incorporate qualitative data from community organizations or surveys for rich insights.
- **Temporal Trends**:
  Focus on post-2022 data to assess the evolving landscape of homelessness in LA County.
- **Expand Geographic Scope**:
  Analyze homeless response services in neighboring counties for regional trends.
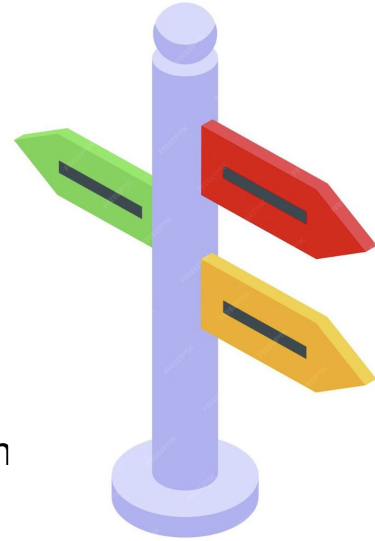
Conclusion/Q&A

- **Key Findings**:
  Downtown consistently receives the highest level of homeless counts,
  while Northeast Antelope Valley shows significantly lower engagement.
- **Demographics and Policies**:
  Demographic factors and policies play a critical role in shaping resource allocation and
  addressing service disparities.
- **Interactive Insights**:
  The interactive mapping tool highlights trends effectively, underscoring the importance of
  equitable resource distribution across different cities in Los Angeles County.