Prevention Strategies

# BRING LA HOME: COMMUNITY MEETING RECOMMENDATIONS: SYSTEM CHANGES

I. **HOMELESS PREVENTION:** Ensure that all Los Angeles County residents facing loss of permanent housing have access to appropriate services and assistance to prevent displacement of individuals and families.

- **A.** Make supportive services available to existing units of low income housing
- **B.** Strengthen existing and create new eviction prevention programs, including rent assistance programs and fund prevention programs for families so they can take part in parenting classes, further their education, etc
- **C.** Enhance the availability of services to precariously housed individuals, linking them to ongoing community services
- **D.** Enhance the availability of education and employment services to precariously housed individuals
- **E.** Stop the "28 day Shuffle" in Los Angeles County hotels and allow these units to become permanent housing
- **F.** Support the expansion at the state level of the Special Circumstances Program through which SSI, CAPI and IHSS recipients can apply for money to help with moving costs after an eviction or to move because of unsafe housing
- **G.** Increase the amount of money that is available and remove the once in a lifetime restriction on receipt of Special Circumstances funding
- **H.** Use the Employment Development Department checks to distribute information about utility cut-off warnings and services for people in fiscal crisis
- **I.** Use Los Angeles as a pilot project to implement recommendations in July 2000 federal GAO report, *Homelessness: Barriers to Using Mainstream Programs*
- **J.** Lobby for improved and expanded Unemployment benefits [UII]
- **K.** Maximize participation rates in the Earned Income Tax Credit [EITC] and lobby to expand this federal program and create a California EITC.

II. **OUTREACH [SEE LONG TERM HOMELESS]**

III. **HOMELESS ACCESS REDESIGN [SEE CHRONIC HOMELESS]**

IV. **SURPLUS PROPERTY:**

- **A.** Use government owned property, federal land and base closures property for siting programs and acquire additional property for rehabilitation
- **B.** Cities that are designated as the Local Redevelopment Organization [LRO's] through the Base Closure Act should be given incentives to build communities and housing that are integrated into these newly formed communities. This includes unused public works land operated by LA County

V. **HOUSING**

- **A. PRESERVATION:** Implement a countywide preservation program to track projects at risk and develop strategies to minimize the number of units converted to market rates.
  - 1.) Develop a preservation strategy for all at-risk affordable housing in each jurisdiction; Create the position of affordable housing preservation coordinator within the County of Los Angeles

**B. PRODUCTION:** Build 40,000 units of affordable, service enriched and supportive housing for very low-income people Countywide over ten years, culminating in an annually sustainable production rate of 4,000 units thereafter.

1.) Ensure enforcement of rent stabilization ordinance in pre-1979 housing where the owner has prepaid the HUD mortgage

2.) Institute "no net loss" policies that preserve existing affordable rental housing stock and require affordable replacement housing

3.) Incorporate the creation and preservation of accessible housing for the disabled into the local housing policy- through the provision of funds or loans to property owners who are willing to make 25% of their units accessible to people with disabilities and to make half of the accessible units affordable to disabled persons on SSI

4.) Establish redevelopment policies that mandate higher levels of low income housing;

5.) Obtain a council district level allocation of the Los Angeles City Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation

6.) Institute density increases, adaptive reuse, relaxed off-street parking requirements, mixed use and other measures to support the development of affordable housing

7.) Advocate for the increase of the per capita amount of both the Federal and State Low-Income Housing Tax Credit programs

8.) Mandate that all new housing projects receiving public funding or support have a set-aside for homeless families and very low income disabled individuals

9.) Establish expedited procedures regarding zoning and permits for low- income housing projects; Establish incentives for private developers to either build low-income housing or partner with nonprofit developers

10.) Strengthen local community consolidated plans with regard to low-income housing, providing incentives for development and penalties for failure to comply with the plan

11.) Expand inclusionary zoning

12.) Consider the trust/land banking model; Lobby for change in Shelter Plus Care regulations to allow for a change in unit size when family size changes

13.) Promote local urban planning that locates affordable housing with easier mass transportation, job and child care access

14.) Lobby the federal government to protect and expand best-practice HUD programs

15.) Encourage "sweat equity" community-built or mutual assistance self-help housing projects

16.) Join the campaign for the Ending Long Term Homelessness Services Initiative to generate targeted federal services funding for new supportive housing units

17.) Link City and County infrastructure funds to willingness of communities to accept higher density and to identify areas zoned for affordable housing, supportive housing and homeless services

18.) Include harm reduction programs within selected permanent supportive housing projects

19.) Create assisted, dorm-style living spaces with a "house parent" for youth aged 18-22 so they can learn necessary skills while they attend community college or other training; Encourage but do not require residents to participate in program services

20.) Maintain strong community based organizations and units of law enforcement to enforce existing anti-discrimination "fair housing" laws

21.) Obtain new federal section 8 certificates or vouchers for Los Angeles County; Amend zoning and land use regulations to support housing, shelter and services needed to end homelessness; tie the development of public toilets to new development projects.

**C. SITING:** Overcome barriers to siting: **Overcoming NIMBY:**

1.) Strengthen local community consolidated plans with regard to low-income housing, providing incentives for development and penalties for failure to comply with the plan

2.) Work with neighborhoods to identify acceptable sites

3.) Link City and County infrastructure funds to willingness of communities to accept higher density and to identify areas zoned for affordable housing, supportive housing and homeless services; Amend zoning and land use regulations to support housing, shelter and services needed to end homelessness

4.) State of CA mandates that all general plans must have a plan to end homelessness in order to receive state funds;

5.) Implementing an educational campaign to cultivate community support for affordable housing development. Target audiences would include Neighborhood Councils, block clubs and other community groups, as well as the general public.

6.) Link affordable housing development to the overall growth and development of local communities and adoption of affirmative zoning and other land use practices to facilitate affordable housing development.

7.) Develop a "fair share" agenda for all 88 cities, 5 supervisors districts and LA City 15 council districts

**D. FUNDING:**

1.) Reform the state-local finance arrangement to create inducements for affordable housing development

2.) Create local affordable housing trust funds

3.) Lobby the state to issue affordable housing bonds

4.) Develop a revolving loan fund to support mixed use developments

5.) Devote a percentage of the Los Angeles Housing Trust Fund and other city and County housing development funds to develop units for families and individuals living at less than 25% of AMI

6.) Support the passage of the National Housing Trust Fund.

## ]VI. SERVICE/SYSTEM INTEGRATION: Zero Tolerance and Accountability

**A.** Conduct a "zero tolerance" audit in all city and county departments to identify and eliminate government actions that cause people to become homeless

B. Each LA County and LA City Department identified as a responsible party in this plan appoint a Homeless Liaison/Coordinator

C. Each Service Planning Area has a regional homeless coordinator

D. Enhance integration of public systems of care in a culturally competent manner.

## VII. MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE: Expand and integrate mental health and substance abuse services

A. Promote and expand the Institute of Co-Occurring Disorders that promotes the integration of mental health and substance abuse services. Ensure these services are gender-specific so that [most often] mothers can receive service and are able to remain with their children

B. Promote the overall integration of care and funding for that the services are truly integrated and funding does not dictate how services will be provided

C. Replicate collaborative models with high degress of service integration, for example Skid Row Collaborative, LAMP Community and Skid Row Housing Trust as well as LAMP Community and Ocean Park Community Center

D. Expand Representative Payee Programs, starting with educating community groups about this program and creating strong collaborations

E. Implement the County Department of Mental Health Community Care Plan to provide coordinated and comprehensive services throughout the county.

F. Develop money management units within current County service structure;

G. Create "Rent First" programs with limited money management services that pay for rent and utilities and allow the recipient to use the rest of the grant as the recipient wishes.

H. Support narrowly tailored treatment programs that recognize the unique needs of various sub-populations, including expanding programs for women with children

I. Expand services for relapsing substance abusers, including the use of "wet" service models

J. Develop treatment programs that permit resumption of treatment after relapse

K. Promote Co-Occurring Disorders Institute created by the Department of Mental Health

L. Increase the number of Community Assessment Service Centers

M. Expand needle exchange programs with no age restrictions to participation

N. Fund more "Harm Reduction Programs"

O. Expand funding for Dually Diagnosed long-term programs and site throughout the County

P. Work with Sober Living Network to expand sober living facilities including "Oxford Home" model. This would include working with the State Commission on Dually Diagnosed to create a new model for this population- 30 day stabilization and reentry and housed in a "social model," with a visiting mental health RN coupled with transportation services

Q. Reassess Proposition 36 and expand Proposition 36 to include the dually diagnosed and monitor it to make sure it is effective

R. Introduce and pass federal legislation modeled after California's Public Law 1170.9 that allow veterans to receive treatment instead of going to prison.

S. Create a subset of section 5150 individuals who need to be taken to a detoxification or crisis intervention facility – such as the proposed centers created by the Co-Occurring Disorders Institute

T. Streamline County bureaucracy so that it parallels state AB 2034 funded programs, giving providers the ability to better tailor programs to meet community needs

U. Ensure that Proposition 63 implementation process [at local and state levels] is aligned with Bring LA Home process

VIII. **DISCHARGE PLANNING: Improve Discharge Planning from foster care, hospitals, jails:** Reduce the rate of homelessness among individuals discharged from Los Angeles County hospitals.

A. **FOSTER CARE [SEE FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUTH]**

B. **HOSPITALS:**

1.) Establish a taskforce to develop a formal protocol for discharging homeless people, part of which would mandate hospital discharge planning for homeless individuals to avoid "discharging to the streets" and shelters have 24-hour pre-approval notice

2.) Expand recuperative care facilities

C. **JAILS:** Dramatically reduce the rate of homelessness among individuals discharged from Los Angeles County jails and State prisons.

1.) Expand the pilot work of the LA County Sheriffs Department

2.) Continue implementing the recommendations within the consent decree between the US Department of Justice and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

3.) Train staff in resources available to inmates after being released

4.) Lobby the state to earmark funding to expand transitional programs for homeless parolees so that California Department of Corrections can expand programs for homeless parolees.

## IX. RESORATIVE JUSTICE: alternative sentencing programs

**A.** Increase access to Community, Homeless, Drug, and Mental Health Court Programs and the Juvenile Mental Health Court in the County.

**B.** Increase the access and effectiveness of these programs designed to limit youth and adult exposure to the criminal justice system. These programs and courts are case management tools that need to be fully integrated into the homeless service delivery system.

## X. SERVICES: Adopt a Housing First approach to service delivery system

## XI. INCOME:

**A. GENERAL RELIEF [SEE CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS]**

**B. SSI: [SEE CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS]**

**C. CALWORKS [SEE FAMILIES]**

**D. FOOD STAMPS, MEDI-CAL AND WIC**

1.) Increase community collaborations with DPSS to expand enrollment

2.) Maximize usage and retention of benefits; maximize the federal waiver that allows restaurants to accept Food Stamps [EBT] as payment from homeless, disabled or elderly people

3.) All Certified Farmers Markets have the equipment and will take EBT cards.

4.) Provide Medi-Cal for homeless youth until 21 years of age; lobby for a targeted Medi-Cal program for homeless people

5.) Restructure Medi-Cal to permit quick changes of providers including supporting the portability of Medi-Cal and/or HMO programs

6.) Lobby the state legislature to reinstate Denti-Cal;

7.) Create an Electronic Benefits Transfer program for WIC participants based on Food Stamp model

8.) Expand nutrition education to emergency shelters and have these shelters work with Los Angeles Regional Foodbank to access nutritious food

9.) All government programs that distribute funding for food to food pantries, meal programs, and shelters should assess the nutritional content of the food being distributed as it pertains to special dietary needs resulting from diabetes, AIDS, cancer, high blood pressure, and cultural and/or religious restrictions.

## XII. EMPLOYMENT:

**A. WORKFORCE INVESTMENT [WIA]**

1.) Increase Workforce Investment Board programs targeting the homeless

2.) Implement a method of reimbursement for homeless training providers outside of the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), as allowed by the Workforce Investment Act

3.) Develop a streamlined process for referring homeless people to appropriate and reputable training programs

4.) Utilize Workforce Investment Act funds to support paid work experience programs for homeless people, as allowed by WIA legislation

5.) Provide training and resources that assist One-Stops in serving homeless people appropriately and increase coordination between One-Stops and homeless service providers to ensure that homeless people have access to comprehensive, quality services

6.) Provide staff resources for initiating and sustaining a joint effort between representatives of government agencies that administer Workforce Investment Act, One-Stop providers, and the homeless community, similar to the City of Los Angeles' existing Disability Network

7.) Support business community efforts to create training programs for homeless people

8.) Greater integration between DPSS and the Workforce Investment Boards [WIB's] to identify and develop skills training programs for CalWORKs and GR participants

9.) Workforce Investment Boards should publicly support and encourage the adoption of comprehensive living wage ordinances in their jurisdictions

10.) All Workforce Investment Boards should appoint a homeless advocate to their Board;

11.) WIA and other wage regulations currently impede the provision of 'transitional or apprenticeship' jobs for a significant number of homeless people. The City/County must create a "transitional/apprenticeship" wage that can be earned by homeless people who are transitioning into the workforce. This might include designating consortium employers as 'job training sites' for transitional employment with the clear objective of transitioning employees/trainees into better paying permanent jobs.

**B. EXPAND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNTIES:** Increase the rate of employment among homeless and at-risk individuals

1.) LA Mayor's Business Team in partnership with the LA County Department of Community and Senior Services convene stakeholders with a focus on creating an "Industry Cluster" training and hiring model for homeless job seekers

2.) LA City creates a Public-Private Employment Outreach Team

3.) Work with LA Community College District to hire students, prioritizing CalWORKs students

4.) Work with UCLA Labor Center to pilot a "Per Diem Pool of Workers" as another model of transitional work.

5.) Implementing a brief planning process designed to address public and private sector employer concerns associated with this effort. This will ensure that the plan is realistic and ultimately successful.

6.) *"Ready, willing and Able:"* Create a short term, high tolerance day labor exchange program, providing one day's housing and food in exchange for one day's work

7.) Work with the IRS to forgive income tax penalties as an incentive for veterans who stay in the VA Grant and Per Diem programs;

8.) Policies must be created to enable those with criminal backgrounds to access more employment opportunities

9.) Require employers receiving public funds to create a job set-aside program for homeless persons

10.) Provide public sector employment positions for homeless job seekers

11.) Expand public-private job creation initiatives;

12.) Develop accountability standards that ensure that homeless participants are assisted in obtaining living wage jobs in growth industries, yet also allow for flexibility in outcomes over the first two years

13.) Create subsidized employment programs for homeless youth

14.) Develop customized employment opportunities for homeless people with disabilities

## XIII. HEALTH CARE

**A.** Encourage the California Primary Care Association to integrate a plan to end homelessness into their programs.

**B.** Coordinate Health Care for the Homeless Network with LAHSA

**C.** Increase recuperative care centers for post-hospitalization discharge for those with primary care health needs