



WESTSIDE CITIES

- BEVERLY HILLS
- CULVER CITY
- LOS ANGELES
- SANTA MONICA
- WEST HOLLYWOOD

Homeless Issues Committee Meeting
February 21, 2008 12:30 PM
Santa Monica Main Library
Staff Meeting Room, 2nd Floor
601 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, CA

Meeting Notes

- I. Call to Order and Introductions**
- II. The meeting was called to order at 12:40 P.M. by Co-Chairs Bloom and Gross.**
- III. Follow-up Announcements: Governing Board meeting of January 17, 2008**

The 2008 COG legislative program was briefly discussed including inclusion of a homelessness objective. A draft will be discussed at the March 20, 2008 COG meeting after which individual Councils will consider the advocacy document.
- IV. Continued Discussion Next Steps RE Specific Request(s) for Federal Assistance Needed to Address Homeless Issues to be Presented to Senator Boxer**

The need for permanent supportive housing with wrap around services has to be the centerpiece of the request for Federal assistance. In addition, the typical formulas short change the Westside which has a high homeless population that goes under counted because funding is distributed only on poverty factors. Part of our challenge will be to effectively educate on the need in order to bring adequate HUD assistance for this vulnerable population. Next steps include: a presentation in April by LAHSA on the homeless count and Super NOFA distribution of funds; connection with the US Interagency Council on Homelessness to help articulate and advocate for funds since LA County is "ground zero" on homelessness in the country. In addition, Flora Gil Krisiloff advocated that the COG stay informed and involved in accessing resource allocations of the State's Mental Health Services Act funds.
- V. Continued Discussion Homeless Issues Advocacy Packet: Packet Contents**

Skid Row Project 50 was reviewed as well as Santa Monica's new service registry outreach as examples of regional efforts on the chronically homeless. Both efforts deal with reducing street homelessness through outreach methods that have proven successful in a number of cities across the nation. Flora Gil Krisiloff provided a brief update of the \$100 million County allocation for homelessness. Eighty-seven RFP's have been received from throughout the County's eight SPA's. Gateway and San Gabriel COG's are creating COG plans to address homelessness and to pursue funding.
- VI. Report on Creation of Santa Monica Chronic Homeless Project Registry**

Julie Rusk and Stacy Rowe provided a report on Santa Monica's Chronic Homeless Registry. The City of Santa Monica implemented an adaptation of NYC's Common Ground's Street to Home Initiative which has reduced street homelessness in New York's Times Square by 87% by moving the most vulnerable, long-term homeless off of the street. Santa Monica, in collaboration with local service providers and the County, has created a Service Registry which will focus the efforts of the City's existing Chronic Homeless Project, which has already moved 77 long-term homeless persons off of the streets. The Street to Home model has been replicated in over a dozen cities over the past year, including Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Denver, and Washington DC. In December 2007, the approach was

initiated in the Skid Row areas of Los Angeles through a Los Angeles County pilot project called Project 50. The model has now also been replicated in Santa Monica.

The Santa Monica initiative was launched with a training and baseline count beginning at 1 a.m. on January 25, 2008. The training included two hours of safety and census-taking training for survey teams. Teams of staff from local homeless services agencies, LA County DMH, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Los Angeles Services Authority (LAHSA) and City staff then conducted a census, focusing their efforts on the geographic areas identified by the Santa Monica Police Department as the locations where clusters of long-term homeless people sleep. Then, on the mornings of January 28-30, the same teams conducted a survey of individuals they encountered on the streets from 3 a.m. to 5 a.m. Police provided security for the street count and subsequent survey efforts. Two-hundred and seventy-seven (277) individuals were counted on the 25th, and 261 (94%) were surveyed on subsequent nights.

The survey methodology was developed by Dr. Jim O'Connell of Boston Healthcare for the Homeless. The survey data will produce a Vulnerability Score that gives weight to several variables, including length of homelessness and physical and mental health status, to predict an individual's likelihood of dying on the streets unless permanently housed. The Vulnerability Score will provide an objective measure to prioritize the future efforts of the Chronic Homeless Project and other initiatives aimed at reducing street homelessness. The ten most vulnerable people will be housed as quickly as possible. Once the top ten are housed, efforts will be directed towards housing the next ten most vulnerable people.

John Maceri told of his personal outreach to Betty, an 83 year old woman living on the 3rd Street Promenade, who was one of the 110 individuals identified as at-risk of dying on the streets. Some characteristics of the vulnerable population identified in Santa Monica include:

- They were older than the total sample with an average age of 55 years, compared to 49 years.
- The vulnerable cohort was 42% of those surveyed, but accounted for 82% of the reported hospitalizations and 71% of the emergency room visits reported.
- 31% of the vulnerable cohort was veterans, compared to 16% of the total sample.

Councilmember Bloom referenced England's "rough sleepers" initiative as the genesis of this approach. Council Members Bloom and McKeown encouraged other cities and Council Districts of Los Angeles to implement this model. Councilmember Gross expressed interest in understanding what it takes to assist people move from the streets to housing and services. However, it was observed that the experience of Santa Monica's Chronic Homeless Project has revealed the need for permanent supportive housing; the need for interdisciplinary teams to provide intensive case management from the initial contact through post-placement; and the potential role of law enforcement and the criminal justice system in linkage to services.

VII. Update: Cold Weather Shelters on the Westside

Pickup locations and program logistics will be reviewed for improvement next year. West LA sheltered 160 homeless persons on average; Culver City sheltered 90 persons on average.

VIII. Update: West Los Angeles VA Proposal for Homeless Vets Therapeutic Housing.

Flora provided an update on Senator Feinstein's focus on assisting the VA in getting the 3 buildings into actual use. Several meetings have occurred with Pete Dougherty, Director of Homeless Veterans Services, the Senator's Washington staff; Congressman Waxman's staff

