

Good afternoon Honorable Members and Chairs of the Committee on Homelessness and Poverty:

My name is Scott Sale and I am a retired internist. I am currently a member of Leo Baeck Temple, a board member of the Westside Coalition, and former chair of New Directions, a veterans transitional and now permanent supportive agency on the Westside and finally and not least of all the former chair and current board member of Imagine LA, a 6 yr old organization that mentors families in order to break the cycle of poverty.

I am here for several purposes on behalf of my congregants at Leo Baeck:

- 1.) We applaud all of you and the Council for forming this committee.
- 2.) We beseech you not to criminalize those unfortunates having to live on the streets as that only costs us all more money- you know the stories of Million Dollar Murray and Hundred Thousand dollar Hannah from Utah. Setting aside monies for supportive housing like Salt Lake City and the state of Utah will by the end of 2015 Eradicate homelessness in Utah. Of course their plight is less than ours and properties and services are cheaper, but they had the "Political Will" to make Housing for the Homeless Happen.
- 3.) Jailing persons living on the streets and disposing of their only worldly possessions with a 24 hour warning without any other options for these mostly mentally challenged folks is a Shande. We have lots of vacant lots and buildings that are at the Cities disposal(with a soon to be released report as demanded by the LA Daily News). In Utah, they housed 62% of their homeless at \$11,000 per apt + social worker which is less than the \$20,000 needed to deal with their ER and Jail visits with 30% of that money coming from Federal Housing Assistance vouchers.
- 4.) The social worker component can even be parlayed with: **FREE SOCIAL WORKERS** known as volunteers from:

The Mayor's Volunteer Corp, Vista Corp, Lift Communities Student volunteers, and Faith Based ones suggest as Imagine LA. They are FREE and there are training programs so that they act like MSWs.

<http://www.lamayor.org/contact>
www.liftcommunities.org/los-angeles
<http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/amicorps/amicorps-vista>
www.imaginela.org

Date: Aug. 12 2015
Submitted in: HP Committee
Council File No: 14-10570-51 152
Item No.: 172
Agency: FVBU C

5.)Private developers are out there who will partner with Nonprofit Operators- they just need the right Nudge and Support from City Councils and Mayors like ours and in Salt Lake City. Homes For Good is good but it is not Great because LA cannot keep up with the demand of our 12% burgeoning homeless population which is not static but rather dynamic. WE can save the City money by spending monies now like they did in Salt Lake and we will be richer later. As my father use to say, hate me now and you will love me later or in this case, make the city poorer now and we will be richer later.

6.) Lastly, for all of those “Other Homeless” living in their vehicles, our Leo Baeck group has developed a template for the faith based world and then maybe the public parking lot world. We would like our conditional use permit and others like us to allow nighttime parking for RV owners. We are modeling our program after the Successful Safe Parking Initiative which has been in existence for 10 years. They safely park 150 vehicles a night with the blessing and financial gain to the City, the SB City Council, the Mayor of SB, and the Chief of Police. Can you imagine if we safely parked the 2200 vehicle owners and got them off the street and eventually into housing. Can you imagine how happy your Council constituents would be? That program costs \$0, that is correct \$0 dollars because the services at least at the faith based level are volunteer and privately organized and funded. We at Leo Baeck have been trying to get this program going for over 4 years. A city wide Conditional Use Permit allowing for undisputed use of faith based lots would really show that LA is progressive and motivated. Those 3 RV owners that we are talking at Leo Baeck that we are hoping to Park will no longer be forced onto city streets and barraged by the police or neighbors to move. We did a presentation to our Board at Leo Baeck with FAQs so we have done our homework. There is no reason that this could not work on a larger scale. You would be heroes to so many people living in their vehicles and to the neighbors whom they bother.

I am now finished and in the words of James Roosevelt the son of FDR- Be Brief, Be Sincere, and Be Seated.



CARECEN

CENTRAL AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER / CENTRO DE RECURSOS CENTROAMERICANOS

August 12, 2015

Homelessness Committee
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Date: AUG. 12, 2015
Submitted in HP Committee
Council File No: 14-10570-S1 952
Item No.: 172
~~Deputy:~~ FUB4C

Re: Support-Item No. 5-B, Motion to amend Section 56.11, Article 6, Chapter 5, of LAMC

Homelessness Committee members,

The Central American Resource Center (CARECEN-LA) supports the motion put forth by Councilmember Cedillo to repeal and replace the excessive punishment for storing personal property on public grounds. Under the proposed ordinance homeless individuals who have no choice but to keep their personal property in public space can be charged with misdemeanors after a number of citations. This punishment is excessive and further criminalizes a community that is in need of assistance rather than enforcement measures.

As an organization that has served the immigrant community in Los Angeles for 32 years, we are also concerned over the harmful effects the proposed ordinance can have on undocumented immigrants. Individuals who are convicted of 3 or more misdemeanors are unable to adjust their status under certain programs such as the DACA and DAPA programs. In addition, individuals with 3 or more misdemeanors are automatically placed on the priority list for deportation according to the new Priority Enforcement Program (PEP). With the limited resources available to the homeless community it is highly likely that many undocumented homeless individuals will acquire multiple misdemeanors and be barred from adjusting their immigration status.

CARECEN supports the motion to amend the proposed ordinance, which will replace the punishment of a misdemeanor with citations. If you have any questions, please contact me via email at marevalo@carecen-la.org or at 213-385-7800 ext. 135.

Sincerely,

Martha Arevalo, Executive Director
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN-LA)

Remarks of Mark Ryavec, president, Venice Stakeholders Association, to the LA City Council's Homelessness and Poverty Committee, 8/12/15

Date: Aug 12, 2015
Submitted in HP Committee
Council File No: 14-16576-8114 (Leg 6)
Item No.: 192 52
Deputy: PUBLIC

Chairman Huizar, Chairman Harris-Dawson, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mark Ryavec. My address is 1615 Andalusia Avenue, Venice, CA. I have resided in Venice for 28 years. I am a former Legislative Analyst for the Los Angeles City Council.

I am president of the Venice Stakeholders Association, a non-profit organization representing residents on issues of neighborhood safety, parking and community improvement.

Our organization is currently suing the City and County of Los Angeles for maintaining a dangerous public nuisance along Venice Beach by allowing illegal camping in the Venice Beach Recreation Area and the illegal storage of tons of personal property in the Venice Beach Recreation Area, which is the coastal park that stretches from the Santa Monica border to the Marina del Rey main channel.

We applaud the passage of the new version of LAMC 63.44 requiring that all personal

property leave city parks at closing time and ask that your committee reject any proposals to tamper with its language. We have asked that the Mayor de-link the parks ordinance from his concerns about the sidewalks ordinance and order the Department of Recreation and Parks and LAPD to immediately begin to enforce it.

We applaud the passage of the new version of the LAMC 56.11, the sidewalks storage ordinance, and we like it just as it was proposed by the City Attorney.

We oppose both Motions 5A and 5B, which will weaken 56.11 and likely render it unenforceable.

Under the ordinance as already amended, personal items such as luggage, backpacks, clothing, documents and medication, and household items left unattended during excursions to perform "necessary tasks" will be protected from removal as long as they are removed within 24 hours after notice is given. That is more than enough time for the owner to return to his or her possessions and move them from the sidewalk.

The proposed amendment in Motion 5-A would categorically remove "personal items such as luggage, backpacks, clothing, documents and

medication, and household items” from the definition of “Personal Property.” This would effectively mean that these categories of items could remain at all times, even after 24 hours’ notice is given.

Moreover, the segregation of various forms of property between so-called “personal items” and other items for purposes of removal by the City creates a distinction that cannot be easily navigated by the Los Angeles Police Department or the Department of Sanitation, which are responsible for cleanups of the sidewalk after the requisite 24-hour notice is given. These departments simply do not have the capacity or time to sort through all of the various items left on the sidewalk more than 24 hours to separate out just the “luggage, backpacks, clothing, documents and medication, and household items” from all the other items. Thus, this proposed amendment would result in the entire ordinance not being enforceable.

While we appreciate the concern about not confiscating personal documents and medication seen in Motion 5-A, it should be borne in mind that under the ordinance as presently amended such items are not to be destroyed, even when they are confiscated. Instead, they are stored and available for retrieval by their owners. This is not at all like

the situation that obtained in the incidents that gave rise to the litigation in the Lavan Decision, where medications and documents were seized and immediately disposed of.

We support one aspect of Motion 5A, the inclusion of specific language requiring ADA passage on all sidewalks 24/7. We propose that it read:

“Property that interferes with sidewalk passability, including passage by the disabled under the Americans with Disabilities Act, may be removed and impounded without prior notice. For the purposes of this section, a passage way of at least five feet, the distance to allow two disabled persons in wheelchairs or assisted by a walker to pass in opposite directions, shall be maintained at all times free of any personal property.”

The purpose of this text is to stop forcing disabled persons (and the elderly, children and the public at large) from having to step into the public street to pass around encampments, which now frequently entirely block sidewalks and parkways.

We ask that another subsection 3(k) be added to 56.11 to read: “Personal Property placed in Public Areas within 300 feet of a residence may

be removed and impounded at any time without prior notice.”

The purpose of this amendment is to establish a buffer zone between residences and urban camping to reduce noise exposure to residents, and incursions by campers onto private property or the use of private gardens, lawns, car ports and garage aprons as toilets, a too frequent occurrence in Venice.

Finally, we urge you to reject Motion 5B. We are informed that both the Department of Sanitation and LAPD find instances when campers will not remove their possessions from sidewalks and parkways to allow city cleanups to proceed when the penalty is only an infraction. The misdemeanor penalty must remain an option for enforcement. The LAPD, as always, has discretion to not employ it when campers obey lawful orders to move their property pursuant to the ordinance to allow cleanups.

Thank you.

Date: Aug 12, 2015

Submitted in HP Committee

Council File No: 14-1656 S1, S2

Item No: 172

Priority: PUBLIC



PACIFIC PALISADES COMMUNITY COUNCIL

August 7, 2015

Hon. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti
Hon. Councilmember Mike Bonin; member, Homelessness and Poverty Committee
Hon. Councilmember Gilbert Cedillo; member, Homelessness and Poverty Committee
Los Angeles City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Via email

Re: CF 14-1551 (SUPPORT in full immediate ordinance implementation); AND CF 14-1656/1656-S1, S2 (OPPOSE in part Motions 5-A & 5-B; expected hearing 8/12/15 in Homelessness and Poverty Committee)

Dear Mayor Garcetti, Councilmember Bonin and Councilmember Cedillo:

Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) is the most broadly-based community organization and the voice of the Palisades since 1973. The Palisades community is alarmed by impacts on its quality of life from the unfortunate reality and growing presence of the population that is homeless within our geography. With these circumstances in mind, PPCC urges that (1) the new parks storage ordinance (LAMC section 63.44) be implemented as written without further delay and (2) proposed amendments to LAMC section 56.11; Motions 5-A & 5-B in CF 1656-S1, S2 be rejected, and that different amendments (described below) be considered/adopted in order to strengthen the ordinance for the City of Los Angeles and its affected residents.

(1) Immediately Implement the Parks Storage Ordinance (LAMC 63.44) As Written. The City Council has voiced no objection to the new version of LAMC 63.44 (which passed in Council by a vote of 12-1-2). Thus, LAMC 63.44 should be implemented immediately to facilitate the removal of persons illegally camping and/or storing personal items on City parks property. Particularly important in the Palisades is the increasing threat of fire resulting from active camping presently occurring in explosively dry chaparral exacerbated by extremely high drought conditions.

(2) Proposed Amendments to the Sidewalks Storage Ordinance (LAMC 56.11; Motions 5-A & 5-B) Should be Rejected and Additional Amendments Should be Considered/Adopted.

A. Do Not Remove the Phrase "personal items such as luggage, backpacks, clothing, documents and medication, and household items." The resulting effect of deleting this phrase is that these categories of items could remain on sidewalks and parkways at all times, even after 24 hours' notice is given. PPCC opposes deletion of this phrase because: (1) under the current language these personal items are specifically "protected from removal as long as they are removed within 24 hours," i.e., ample time for the owner of property to claim and remove their possessions from the sidewalk or parkway; (2) the Mayor can rest assured that personal items, especially documents and medications, will not be destroyed or confiscated because the proposed existing LAMC 56.11 assures they will be cataloged and stored for a later retrieval; (3) LAPD and the Department of Sanitation would be unduly burdened in any legal challenge

of segregating between “personal items” and these other items then not entitled to removal; and (4) these exempted items when left on sidewalks and parkways for more than 24 hours arguably lead to permanent encampments, drug use, food waste, public defecation, urination and inebriation, the attraction of vermin, and other public nuisances.

- B. Do Not Remove the Misdemeanor Violations of LAMC 56.11 (Motion 5-B).** In some instances, campers will not remove their possessions when the penalty is only an infraction. While LAPD is not required to file a misdemeanor, they must have that option in instances when campers are recalcitrant.
- C. Add a New Amendment That Provides For a 300 Feet Buffer Zone from Residences.** PPCC recommends that another subsection be added to read: *“Personal Property placed in Public Areas within 300 feet of a residence may be removed and impounded at any time without prior notice. Post-removal notice shall be provided as set forth in Section 56.11, Subsection 4(b) below.”* The proximity of encampments to residences in the Palisades has caused a host of dangerous conditions and it is incumbent upon the City to establish appropriate measures to ensure quiet enjoyment, health and safety throughout the community.
- D. Revise Language Relative to ADA Access.** While PPCC supports the addition of a new subsection to enable immediate removal of property that interferes with safe passage on the sidewalk, including ADA access, we suggest that the language proposed in Motion 5-A be replaced with: *“Property that interferes with sidewalk passability, including passage by the disabled under the Americans with Disabilities Act, may be removed and impounded without prior notice. For the purposes of this section, a passage way of at least five feet, the distance to allow two disabled persons in wheelchairs or assisted by a walker to pass in opposite directions, shall be maintained at all times free of any personal property. Post-removal notice shall be provided as set forth in Section 56.11, Subsection 4(b) below.”*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposed amendments.

Sincerely,

Christina Spitz
President
Pacific Palisades Community Council

cc (via email):

Hon. Mike Feuer, Los Angeles City Attorney
Hon. Councilmembers Huizar, Harris-Dawson, Price (members, Homelessness and Poverty Committee)
Charlie Beck, Chief, Los Angeles Police Department.
Tina Nieto, Captain, West Los Angeles Division, Los Angeles Police Department
Enrique Zaldivar, Director, Bureau of Sanitatio



STAND FOR JUSTICE

August 12, 2015

SENT VIA EMAIL

Councilmember Jose Huizar, Co-Chair
Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Co-Chair
Councilmember Mike Bonin
Councilmember Gilbert Cedillo
Councilmember Curren D. Price, Jr.
Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Date: AUG 12, 2015
Submitted in PP Committee
Council File No: 14-1656-51352
Item No.: 152
City: PUBLIC

RE: *LAMC Section 56.11; Council File 14-1656*

I write on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California (“ACLU SoCal”) to express strong concern regarding the recently-passed Ordinance No. 183762, which amended L.A.M.C. Section 56.11 to prohibit the placement or storage of personal belongings on public property. While the Ordinance only became effective as of July 18, 2015, there are already two further amendments pending due to concerns that the ordinance is unconstitutional as drafted and would have the effect of criminalizing homelessness. ACLU SoCal opposes the Ordinance – both as written and with the additional amendments – and urges its rescission. Instead of enacting laws designed to ameliorate only the visible evidence of homelessness in Los Angeles, the city should undertake real solutions to homelessness – namely a significant expansion of access to both affordable and permanent supportive housing.

As currently written, the Ordinance will lead to the systemic violation of homeless persons’ civil rights and will create the risk of legal liability for the city. The Ordinance allows city personnel to confiscate homeless persons’ personal items, including gear needed to survive outdoors and important documents, identification, and medications, often with limited or no notice. Because the Ordinance specifies that moving one’s property to another location on public property within the City does not constitute removal of the property, many homeless persons will have no way to comply with the Ordinance. This implicates homeless persons’ rights under the Fourth, Eighth, and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. *See Lavan v. City of Los Angeles*, 693 F.3d 1022 (9th Cir. 2012); *Kincaid v. City of Fresno*, No. 1:06-cv-1445 (E.D. Cal. Dec. 8, 2006); *Jones v. City of Los Angeles*, 444 F.3d 1118 (9th Cir. 2006). The proposed amendment to remove explicit references to “personal items such as luggage, backpacks, clothing, documents and medication, and household items” from the definition of property

Executive Director Hector O. Villagra **Director of Orange County and Inland Empire Offices** Belinda Escobosa Helzer

Chair Shari Leinwand **Vice Chair** Susan Adelman **Vice Chair** Richard Barry

Chairs Emeriti Danny Goldberg Allan K. Jonas* Burt Lancaster* Irving Lichtenstein, MD* Jarl Mohn Laurie Ostrow* Stanley K. Sheinbaum Stephen Rohde
*deceased

subject to the Ordinance, will not solve these issues as these items would still be deemed “tangible property” within the meaning of the definition. Further, proposals to limit the imposition of criminal penalties will not cure the Constitutional defects of the Ordinance. The federal government opposes local criminalization of homelessness and has recently weighed in on litigation on the side of homeless plaintiffs. *Bell v. City of Boise*, No. 1:09-cv-540 (D. Idaho Aug. 6, 2015); *see also* U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, *Searching Out Solutions: Constructive Alternatives to the Criminalization of Homelessness* 8 (2012).

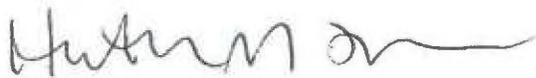
Not only will enforcement of this ordinance violate the Constitutional rights of people experiencing homeless, it will also have the counterproductive effect of perpetuating homelessness. Because such laws cause homeless persons to develop criminal records, it becomes even more difficult for them to secure and maintain needed housing, employment and public benefits – the very resources needed to escape homelessness. Enforcement is also expensive. As described in the recent report of the Office of the City Administrative Officer, the City of Los Angeles spends in excess of \$100 million annually on homelessness, of which at least half is spent by the Police Department. Instead of spending this money on counterproductive enforcement, the City should devote these funds to creating needed resources.

Further, an unintended consequence of the ordinance is the negative impact it will have on immigrants. Children and parents receiving misdemeanor citations under the Ordinance may lose eligibility for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA) programs. Because of the discretionary nature of these programs, even infractions received for violating the Ordinance may negatively impact an immigrant’s ability to receive relief.

The City must stop seeking to address only the visible symptoms of homelessness through ordinances that penalize some of its most vulnerable citizens. Doing so is not only counterproductive and costly, but also creates a risk of systemic violations of homeless persons’ civil rights, and accompanying liability for the city. Instead, the City should focus on creating much-needed affordable and permanent supportive housing.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (714) 450-3962, ext. 107.

Sincerely,



Heather Maria Johnson,
Dignity for All Project



Date: AUG 12 2015
Submitted in HP Committee
Council File No: 14-1070-51552
Item No.: 132
Deputy: PUBLIC



Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments

Advancing the Dialogue

August 2015

Background and Intent

To end homelessness for everyone, we must link people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, including people sleeping and living in encampments¹, with permanent housing opportunities matched with the right level of services to ensure that those housing opportunities are stable and successful. It is only through the provision of such opportunities that we can provide lasting solutions for individuals and communities. Across the country, many communities are wrestling with how to create effective solutions and provide such housing opportunities for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The presence of encampments often creates heightened awareness and concerns in communities and requires different approaches than working with individual people who are unsheltered.

It is important to acknowledge that there are many reasons that some people who are unsheltered may sleep and live in encampment settings, including that such settings offer some people a greater sense of community and safety. It is also important to acknowledge that there are many reasons that other community members may have concerns regarding the presence of encampments within their communities, including concerns related to health, sanitation, and safety. Fundamentally, the solution is not prioritizing one perspective over another; the focus on the goal of ending homelessness requires that communities implement strategies that will link all people experiencing homelessness to permanent housing opportunities.

The perspectives that USICH has brought to the preparation of this document include:

- The presence of encampments in our communities is an indicator of the critical need to create more effective and efficient local systems for responding to the crisis of homelessness.
- The formation of encampments does not represent an end to homelessness, and strategies that focus on making encampments an official part of the system for responding to homelessness can serve to distract communities from focusing on what is most important—connecting people experiencing homelessness to safe, stable, permanent housing.
- Authorizing encampments as an official part of the system for responding to homelessness creates costs to ensure the safety, security, and well-being of the people living within the encampments, which can prevent funding from being directed to supporting and creating permanent housing and service options for all who are unsheltered.
- People sleeping and living in encampments are diverse and the housing and services interventions provided must address a range of needs, challenges, and goals. Some people may be experiencing chronic homelessness and need access to permanent supportive housing, intensive services, and healthcare supports; other people may need rapid re-housing interventions with less intense services; and others may need to be linked to mainstream affordable housing opportunities.
- The forced dispersal of people from encampment settings is not an appropriate solution or strategy, accomplishes nothing toward the goal of linking people to permanent housing opportunities, and can make it more difficult to provide such lasting solutions to people who have been sleeping and living in the encampment.

¹ USICH recognizes that different terms are used for such settings—such as “tent cities”—but has chosen to use “encampments” in this document, while encouraging communities to use whatever language works best locally.

- Providing lasting solutions and ending the homelessness of people living in encampments requires a thoughtful, coordinated, and collaborative plan and process to ensure that people can be linked to appropriate housing options and that the presence of encampments in the community can be resolved.

USICH has addressed related issues in our 2012 publication, [Searching out Solutions: Constructive Alternatives to the Criminalization of Homelessness](#), and in the [materials](#) on our website. More recently, our work with community partners has indicated that more specific and concrete guidance is needed to help organizations implement proactive, solutions-focused approaches to end homelessness for people sleeping and living in encampments and to address community concerns. This document is intended to offer such guidance and provides a framework for the development of local strategies so that communities can create and provide lasting housing solutions for people living in encampments.

The information and ideas contained within this document have been developed by USICH based upon conversations and problem-solving discussions with advocates, housing and services providers, and government officials across the country regarding what they have learned, and are still learning, about the most effective approaches and strategies. USICH believes that there is still more to be learned and explored, and this document is not intended as a final statement on the best practices for addressing the housing and services needs of people living in encampments. Rather, the intended purpose of this document is to advance community-level discussions that will strengthen practices and strategies. We welcome dialogue and input on the perspectives and information presented here.

Effective Strategies and Approaches

Communities seeking to provide lasting solutions to end homelessness for people living in encampments should first develop a local action plan that engages both residents of the encampment and an array of community partners.

The action plan should include four key elements, summarized here and described in more detail below. A planning checklist can be found on pages 11 and 12 of this document.

- 1. Preparation and Adequate Time for Planning and Implementation:** Action plans for creating and providing housing solutions for people living in encampments should ensure that there is adequate time for strategizing, collaboration, outreach, engagement, and the identification of meaningful housing options. Adequate time is essential to achieve the primary objective of meeting the needs of each person and assisting them to end their homelessness.
- 2. Collaboration across Sectors and Systems:** Action plans should include collaboration between a cross-section of public and private agencies, neighbors, business owners, and governmental entities, based upon on where the encampment is located. The action plan should feature strong communication among a broad range of community service providers and managers of the permanent housing resources that are being utilized in order to maximize efficiency, align resources, and address system gaps.
- 3. Performance of Intensive and Persistent Outreach and Engagement:** Action plans should involve agencies that have strong outreach experience and demonstrated skills in engaging vulnerable and unsheltered people. Effective outreach is essential for effectively connecting people with coordinated assessment systems, resources, and housing options.

4. **Provision of Low-Barrier Pathways to Permanent Housing:** Action plans should focus on providing people with clear, low-barrier pathways for accessing and attaining permanent housing opportunities and should not focus on relocating people to other encampment settings.

1. Preparation and Adequate Time for Planning and Implementation

Providing adequate time to organize stakeholders and develop an action plan will increase the likelihood of success. There are times when swift action may be required; even in such circumstances, partners should develop a shared action plan that offers guidance on how to connect individuals and families with permanent, stable housing. Stakeholders should have a clear understanding of the strategies, interagency agreements, protocols, the roles they play, how interventions will be timed, and how people living in the encampment will be alerted to the plan.

Important elements to consider when developing an action plan include:

Shared Agreements and Decisions

- **Determine Timing:** Having adequate time to implement a comprehensive and effective strategy is preferable, but in some instances, property owners, safety officials, or others may require or enforce a strict timeline. It is always important to articulate the timeline, so that residents can determine their options and so that partners know the timeline for connecting people to housing options. Even when there is flexibility for determining the timeline, it is still important to act with a sense of urgency and establish an aggressive timetable, as encampment communities often experience crises that can include violence, criminal victimization, and health and safety risks. An emphasis should be placed on balancing the time it will take to develop the plan, recruit necessary partners, implement effective outreach, respond to the concerns of property owners, attend to safety needs, respond to public attention, address other urgent issues that may arise, and connect people to services and housing.

Throughout the process, there should be sufficient feedback mechanisms among stakeholders to evaluate progress and, if needed, reevaluate the timeline to ensure that solutions are people-focused and that activities do not cause additional harm or trauma for people experiencing homelessness. Efforts that rush events or prematurely disperse people without connecting them to housing could cause relocation to a different encampment setting. There is also a risk that premature dispersal might threaten the partners' ability to build trusting relationships with residents, which is vital to successful housing outcomes. Whenever possible, activities should be tracked through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to allow for efficient reporting and evaluation.

- **Create Shared Purpose and Intent:** While many of the partners will have encountered or worked with people experiencing homelessness, they will likely have differing approaches and assumptions. Action plans should communicate a shared purpose for all stakeholders involved, including encampment residents, should emphasize safety for all parties involved, and should focus on access to appropriate permanent housing.
- **Develop Shared Outcomes:** Action plans should identify expected outcomes for each stage of the intervention and build consensus regarding how successful outcomes are being defined. A focus on shared goals enhances collaborative efforts and the development of coordinated

strategies, as well as focusing partners on identifying the resources and activities necessary to achieve outcomes.

- **Develop Shared Protocols/MOU:** In order to minimize confusion and miscommunication, it is important that action plans clearly delineate the *who, what, when, where, and why* for each identified strategy and incorporate those details into protocols agreed to among stakeholders. A list of shared protocols may then be used to inform a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which is useful for formalizing the ongoing, collaborative response to encampments in the future.
- **Create a Communications Plan:** Action plans should incorporate a communications strategy that informs stakeholders how to interact with the media and respond to questions from community members. One entity should take the lead role as primary media contact so that communication is consistent and prompt.

Assess Needs and Available Resources:

- **Identify Land Owner(s):** One of the first steps to implementing the plan is to identify who owns the land where the people are living. Planning should consider the needs of the land owner and determine what role the land owner may need to play in the action plan. It is critical to include the land owner as soon as possible to ensure costly, harmful, and uncoordinated preemptive measures are avoided.
- **Assess Needs of People Living in the Encampment:** As soon as an encampment is identified, it is important to assess the unique needs of every individual living there and determine how much time and what resources are needed to connect individuals and families with appropriate housing and supportive services. Particular attention should be given to individuals who are highly vulnerable, people experiencing chronic homelessness, people with mental health issues, and people struggling with substance use. Additionally, specialized attention is needed for individuals who may be ineligible for some housing options, including undocumented immigrants, those with histories of involvement with the criminal justice system, and people who are subject to registration requirements as sex offenders.
- **Identify Adequate Staffing and Resources:** Based upon the projected needs, it is important to determine how existing housing and services resources can be aligned and targeted to connect people to permanent housing. This analysis of resources should also identify how gaps in resources may be filled and what staffing will be necessary to implement the plan. It is important to identify flexible funding that outreach teams can use to offer quick interim housing solutions for people who have already identified a more permanent housing option but need extra time to access that housing. For example, some people may need time to get approved for housing, need assistance gathering documentation, or need help with transportation or move-in costs.

Next Steps

- **Plan for Preventing Encampment from Being Recreated:** Action plans should include strategies for cleanup measures as well as how the space will be returned to its intended use. Additional security and outreach measures may be necessary to prevent future encampments from being formed at the same location.

- **Plan for Follow-up Contacts and Tracking Outcomes:** Action plans should include strategies for following up with people who have been assisted in order to track their outcomes and measure progress.
- **Standardize Future Responses:** It is important for communities to develop standardized approaches and align policies across programs and agencies, allowing for efficient and effective responses. A standardized response should include law enforcement policies and procedures, communication and coordination among outreach teams and service agencies, and agreements with housing providers to accept referrals from outreach workers and case managers. Since encampments are often transitory or cross jurisdictional boundaries, it is also helpful for neighboring cities to align local plans so that strategies are unified.
- **Integrate with the Community's Strategic Efforts to End Homelessness:** Finally, it is important to integrate these actions with the community's strategic efforts to end homelessness. Partners should debrief and identify lessons that can be learned from the implementation of the action plan in order to both inform future responses and improve the homelessness crisis response system as a whole.

2. Collaboration across Sectors and Systems

The most effective action plans involve early engagement with multiple public and private stakeholders including, but not limited to, local officials, city and county staff, Continuum of Care agencies, service providers, housing organizations, law enforcement, business leaders, strategic planning bodies, and people who have experienced homelessness. Collaborative efforts can better align available resources and more quickly connect people with housing, health care, and services.

When developing or expanding a collaborative partnership, consider engaging a broad array of stakeholders, including:

- **People Living in Encampments:** People living in encampments have a strong interest in planned efforts and outcomes, may regard the site as their home and community, and understandably expect that others will respect their privacy and personal property. Planning should assume that people are entitled to participate in decisions that will affect their lives and should seek ways to incorporate their input. Leaders in an encampment community are valuable partners and can offer information about the culture of the community and can help outreach workers and other providers connect with people and better understand their needs and goals.
- **Continuum of Care Agencies:** Agencies working with the local Continuum of Care (CoC) can provide leadership and guidance based on their expertise in implementing programs and coordinating system-level responses for people experiencing homelessness. The CoC should identify key agencies to participate within the action plan and should determine how coordination among those agencies will be managed. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has an [online resource](#) where community leaders can find contact information for the CoC.
- **Other Social Service and Health Care Agencies:** Agencies that are not primarily focused on homelessness, but that serve people who are experiencing homelessness, such as behavioral and physical health care providers, affordable housing providers, or legal aid programs are also important partners and can offer access to data, resources, and expertise.

- **Community Outreach and Engagement Teams:** Outreach teams, case managers, and peer specialists often have relationships with people in encampments, can provide insight into the challenges and realities people are facing, and bring knowledge and experience with effective outreach and engagement strategies.
- **Law Enforcement Agencies:** Law enforcement agencies offer expertise on public safety and the protection of vulnerable individuals. Law enforcement agencies can also clarify policies that impact encampment settings and the charges that people can accrue if they are in violation of a municipal ordinance. In some communities, law enforcement personnel participate as core members of outreach teams, including helping to ensure the safety of outreach personnel. In other instances, law enforcement officials call upon outreach teams for assistance when they encounter people who are experiencing homelessness and are at-risk of arrest. Close coordination and communication between the outreach teams and law enforcement agencies is essential for assuring the safety of staff and of people experiencing homelessness.
- **Local Government Agencies and Officials:**
 - **Elected Officials:** Elected officials are important leaders in ending homelessness and have an interest in being responsive to citizen concerns about their neighborhoods. Elected officials can take a leadership role in convening stakeholders and can help direct attention and funding toward strategies that will connect people to housing.
 - **Planning, Parks and Recreations, and Public Works:** Encampments are often located under bridges, next to roads and highways, or on other public lands that a public entity is obligated to monitor and maintain. Staff from such agencies should have information about ownership of the land and security measures currently in place, may have useful information about the site and the people living there, and can offer expertise in sanitation and security once people have been assisted and the site is vacant.
 - **Human or Social Services Departments:** City and county human services offices likely manage resources and programs that can address homelessness, may have housing and service contracts with a variety of providers in the community, and can recommend nonprofit organizations to help with interventions. These departments may also be able to identify funding and resources to expand outreach efforts or to support the provision of services and housing options.
 - **Public Health and Behavioral Health Care Departments:** Public health and behavioral health care departments can both play key roles in outreach via public health nurses, doctors, and skilled clinicians. They can also provide education regarding sanitation, health and safety concerns, and available services. Such departments have critical roles to play in the provision of services to people as they access housing and other services, and after they are in permanent housing.
- **Business Leaders:** Businesses may be impacted by encampments, which can motivate them to support effective solutions. Business leaders can leverage their professional affiliations and relationships with the local Chamber of Commerce and other business associations to generate public support and provide resources for programs that are creating lasting solutions.

- **Philanthropic Organizations:** The involvement of private funds in planning efforts may help identify organizations with strong track records of ending homelessness. Some funders may also be interested in supporting expanded, outcomes-focused efforts to create solutions for the issue of people living in encampments within the community.
- **Faith-based Organizations:** Many faith-based organizations are interested in improving the lives of people experiencing homelessness and provide volunteer and financial support to assist the community response. While volunteer efforts, financial contributions, and in kind donations may currently focus on meeting individuals' daily subsistence needs, such organizations may also be seeking opportunities to partner with other organizations to support permanent solutions to homelessness.
- **Advocates:** Advocates can ensure that the voices of people in encampments are being heard, can use their positions to affirm the human need for housing, and can make the case for increased investments in affordable, safe, high-quality housing and services. Advocates can also help research and articulate the impact of counterproductive ordinances that criminalize homelessness.

3. Intensive and Persistent Outreach and Engagement

Outreach and engagement efforts are critical components of any successful plan that addresses the needs of people living in encampments and should be implemented throughout the process. The deployment of cross-disciplinary outreach teams is an important strategy for aiding people to move into permanent housing. Cross-disciplinary teams might include outreach workers, law enforcement, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs staff, public health, city and county staff that can connect people to benefits, peer specialists, and other trained service providers and volunteers. To ensure success, outreach and engagement teams must have the ability to refer individuals directly to permanent housing opportunities and interim options that can be immediately available.

Key outreach and engagement strategies include:

- **Identify all Members of the Encampment by Name and Implement Ongoing Outreach:** It is important that outreach teams identify every single person living at the site, including collecting necessary demographic data and other relevant information. Information about how many people are living at the site allows the coordinating team to begin to identify the scale of resources that will be needed. By learning about people's histories through an iterative engagement process, outreach workers and case managers can better work with individuals and families to tailor interventions that will lead to the appropriate permanent housing solutions and the right services and supports.
- **Maintain a Consistent Presence in the Encampment:** Outreach workers should maintain a consistent presence at the site so that relationships of trust can be formed, allowing for clear and precise information about the plans and options available for people. This is especially important for engaging people who may not be responding to outreach or who have not accepted the options being offered by providers. Consistent and ongoing outreach and engagement efforts offer individuals multiple opportunities to connect with outreach workers on their own terms.

- **Maintain Honest and Transparent Communication:** Outreach workers and other members of the collaborative action plan should make sure that their communication with people is honest and forthcoming. It is important to be transparent about the process and timelines while at the same time making sure not to over-promise resources, options, or expected outcomes.
- **Identify Leadership from within the Encampment:** Many encampment communities have developed some type of a leadership structure. It is important to include these leaders in the process in order to better understand the needs and goals of people and to foster open and trustworthy relationships between people staying at the site and the agencies and organizations implementing the action plan.
- **Cross-train and Share Information:** Cross-training and sharing information among outreach teams increases the likelihood of success by enabling partners to develop shared responses to both crisis and non-crisis situations. It also provides insight into practices and policies of outreach teams, facilitates coordination of activities, and enhances sensitivity in working with people experiencing homelessness.
- **Link with Housing Search Services:** Outreach workers should partner with housing navigators, housing search specialists, and/or landlord liaisons to help people access appropriate housing opportunities.

4. Provide Low-Barrier Pathways to Permanent Housing

People experiencing unsheltered homelessness, including those who live in encampments, are not uniform in their housing and services needs. Some individuals may be experiencing chronic or long-term homelessness, while others may be encountering their first and only brief experience without housing.

Considerations for providing the range of housing solutions needed include:

- **Apply Housing First Strategies and Practices:** Implementing the proven practice of Housing First will remove unnecessary obstacles, requirements, and expectations so that people can access housing as quickly as possible. Removing as many barriers as possible will help prevent people from being “screened out” of the housing options that are available.
- **Align Activities with the Existing Homelessness Crisis Response and Coordinated Entry System:** Efforts to assist people living in encampments should not stand alone from the community’s broader efforts to respond to the crisis of homelessness and effectively reach and serve other people who are unsheltered in the community. It is also important to ensure that living in an encampment does not become the only way to access necessary housing and services. Coordinated assessment, intake, and placement strategies help assure that people are prioritized for and linked to the housing and services interventions that are most appropriate to their needs and will most efficiently end their homelessness.
- **Offer Interim Housing Opportunities and a Clear Path to Permanent Housing:** Permanent housing opportunities cannot always be immediately accessed, so it is important to be able to provide an immediate, interim housing opportunity (which could include shelter, bridge housing, or other temporary arrangements) without barriers to entry while permanent housing and appropriate supports are being secured.

- **Identifying an Adequate Supply of Housing Options:** People will need access to a variety of permanent housing options, including permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, and mainstream affordable housing opportunities. People will also need assistance in identifying landlords from whom they can rent units. Public housing authorities and multi-family owners can be recruited and encouraged to establish preferences for people experiencing homelessness. Communities can create risk mitigation pools of funds to help address concerns landlords may have, and service providers can work with landlords to address concerns that may arise.
- **Engage State and Federal Partners:** State and Federal partners may have information and/or resources that can increase availability and access to permanent housing, and there may be opportunities to better align Federal, state, and local funding and programs to provide the pathways into permanent housing more efficiently and effectively.

Conclusion

We want to thank all of the communities that have participated in conversations and written dialogue about this topic and the challenges they face in their efforts to end homelessness for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness and living in encampment communities. It is our hope and intention that this document and the framework presented will advance community-level discussions that will strengthen practices and foster strategies for addressing those challenges. We look forward to continuing to work together to broaden our understanding and share solutions and lessons learned.

For more information, or to share your experiences and perspectives on these issues, please contact the [USICH Regional Coordinator](#) who works with communities within your state. You can also learn more about [related topics](#) on the USICH website.

Planning Checklist

Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments: Advancing the Dialogue



To end homelessness for everyone, we must link people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, including people sleeping and living in encampments², with permanent housing opportunities matched with the right level of services to ensure that those housing opportunities are stable and successful. It is only through the provision of such opportunities that we can provide lasting solutions for individuals and communities. Across the country, many communities are wrestling with how to create effective solutions and provide such housing opportunities for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. This Planning Checklist is intended as an accompaniment to *Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments: Advancing the Dialogue*, a framework for developing local action plans in order to aid policy-makers, government officials, and practitioners in developing a thoughtful, coordinated, and collaborative plan to ensure that people living in encampments are linked to permanent housing. More detailed information regarding each of the actions identified here is provided within the full document.

Prepare with Adequate Time for Planning and Implementation

When developing an action plan:

- ☑ **Determine Timing.** Articulate an action plan timeline so residents can determine their options and partners know the timeline for connecting people to housing.
- ☑ **Create Shared Purpose, Intent, and Outcomes.** Develop a common purpose and intent for all stakeholders that enhances collaborative efforts and helps partners identify resources and activities to achieve shared outcomes.
- ☑ **Develop Shared Protocols/MOU.** Create a Memorandum of Understanding that formalizes relationships among stakeholders and delineates protocols.
- ☑ **Create a Communications Plan.** Incorporate a communications strategy on how to interact with the media and respond to questions from community members.
- ☑ **Identify the Land Owner(s).** Consider the needs of the land owner and determine his/her role.
- ☑ **Assess Needs of People Living in the Encampment.** Consistently assess the needs of every person.
- ☑ **Identify Adequate Staffing and Resources.** Based on the projected need, determine how existing housing and services resources can be aligned to connect people to permanent housing.
- ☑ **Plan for Preventing Encampments from Being Recreated.** Create strategies for cleanup measures as well as how the site will be used and/or secured in the future.
- ☑ **Plan for Follow-up Contacts and Tracking Outcomes.** Include strategies for following up with people who have been assisted in order to track outcomes.
- ☑ **Standardize Future Responses.** Develop standardized approaches that incorporate law enforcement policies and agreements with housing providers.
- ☑ **Integrate with the Community's Strategic Efforts to End Homelessness.** Identify lessons that can strengthen the community's overall homelessness crisis response system.

² USICH recognizes that different terms are used for such settings—such as “tent cities”—but has chosen to use “encampments” in this document, while encouraging communities to use whatever language works best locally.

Collaborate Across Sectors and Systems

When developing or expanding a collaborative partnership, engage stakeholders, including:

- ☑ **People Living in Encampments.** To help understand the needs and goals of residents.
- ☑ **Continuum of Care Agencies.** To provide expertise in coordinating system-level responses.
- ☑ **Other Social Service and Healthcare Agencies.** To provide access to data, resources and expertise.
- ☑ **Community Outreach and Engagement Teams.** To help develop the best engagement strategies.
- ☑ **Law Enforcement Agencies.** To coordinate outreach and ensure the safety of all.
- ☑ **Local Government Agencies and Officials.** To help coordinate government resources and action, specifically:
 - ☑ Elected Officials
 - ☑ Planning, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works
 - ☑ Human or Social Services Departments
 - ☑ Public Health and Behavioral Health Care Departments
- ☑ **Business Leaders.** To leverage professional relationships to generate support and resources.
- ☑ **Philanthropic Organizations.** To involve private funders that have interest in ending homelessness.
- ☑ **Faith-based Organizations.** To provide volunteer and financial support.
- ☑ **Advocates.** To ensure that the voices of people in encampments are heard and raise other concerns.

Perform Intensive and Persistent Outreach and Engagement

Implement outreach and engagement efforts throughout the process, including:

- ☑ **Identifying All Members of the Encampment By Name and Implement Ongoing Outreach.** Having a full understanding of the population is important to scale resources and tailor interventions.
- ☑ **Maintaining a Consistent Presence in the Encampment.** Devote adequate time and resources to ensure trusting relationships are being developed with residents.
- ☑ **Maintaining Honest and Transparent Communication.** Transparency about the process and timelines ensures trusting relationships are formed.
- ☑ **Identifying Leadership from within the Encampment.** Include such leaders in the process in order to better understand the needs and goals of people and to strengthen relationships.
- ☑ **Cross-Training and Sharing Information.** Sharing information among outreach teams increases success by enabling partners to develop shared responses to both crisis and non-crisis situations.
- ☑ **Linking with Housing Search Services.** Outreach workers should partner with housing navigators, housing search specialists, and landlord liaisons to help people access housing.

Provide Low-Barrier Pathways to Permanent Housing

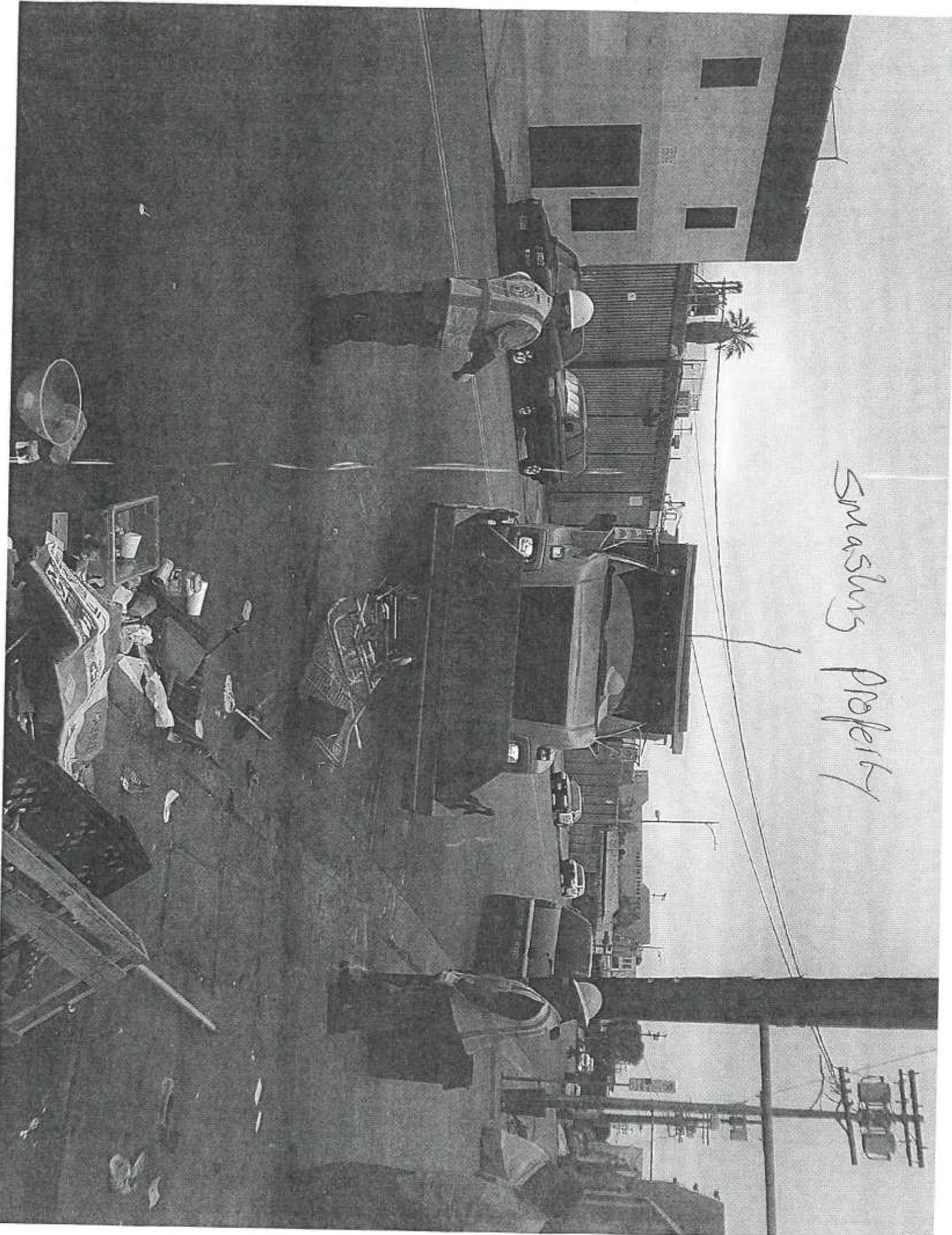
To provide a range of housing solutions, consider:

- ☑ **Applying Housing First Strategies and Practices.** Remove obstacles, requirements, and expectations so that people can access housing as quickly as possible.
- ☑ **Aligning Activities with the Existing Homeless Crisis Response and Coordinated Entry System.** Coordinated entry assures people are prioritized for and provided housing and services that meet their needs.
- ☑ **Offering Interim Housing Opportunities and a Clear Path to Permanent Housing.** It is important to provide immediate, interim housing without barriers to entry while permanent housing is being secured.
- ☑ **Identifying an Adequate Supply of Housing Options.** People will need access to a variety of housing options, including permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, and mainstream affordable housing.
- ☑ **Engaging State and Federal Partners.** Identify opportunities to align Federal, state, and local funding and programs to provide pathways to permanent housing.

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Smashing Property



Seizing
property

