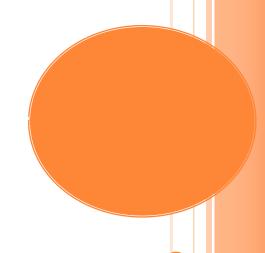# OUTREACH/ENGAGEMENT-ENCAMPMENTS/STREET HOMELESSNESS

STRATEGY BRIEFS

November 12, 2015

6. POTENTIAL OUTREACH/ENGAGEMENT-ENCAMPMENTS/STREET HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIES

Potential Strategy 6.1
Develop a Plan to Strengthen and Expand the Coordinated Entry System for Families, Single Adults, and Transitional Age Youth

Background

The Coordinated Entry System (CES) developed throughout Los Angeles County over the past two plus years has been a significant achievement. It has fostered collaboration and coordination among the wide mosaic of service providers, government agencies and other stakeholders. One of the key areas of success is the expansion of street-based outreach and engagement teams to work with people experiencing homelessness in the largest County in the United States.

With the largest street-based homeless population in the US, having robust, coordinated outreach and navigation teams is critical to the success of CES. While the framework for this expansion and coordination has been established in each Service Planning Area (SPA) and fostered by the CES leadership, there are opportunities to bring this important work to the next level as part of a coordinated effort to combat homelessness.

1. **Description of the Proposed Strategy**

   The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) will oversee the Coordinated Entry System (CES) moving forward, including the expansion and further implementation of CES countywide. LAHSA will continue the strong community participation and feedback elements already in place in its development of the expansion, build on the existing outreach infrastructure in each SPA, and will serve to enhance coordination and collaboration broadly. At the same time, LAHSA will engage mainstream service systems which frequently serve homeless families and individuals, to explore opportunities to engage homeless families and individuals during their interactions with those mainstream service systems.

   - Create a coordinated outreach strategy that prioritizes target populations, is housing focused and outcomes driven, and enhances existing collaborative efforts, including a system of best practices that incorporates the needs of each SPA.
   - Build upon the infrastructure of 211 so that it functions as one central phone number that everyone can call; provide assistance to 211 to build capacity to be able to take calls not only for families but for individuals and transition age youth as well.
   - Assess the CES partner agencies that exist and operate currently within each respective SPA to ensure that they are able to:

     o Expand CES to ensure that all of the necessary stakeholders are participating in the planning and further implementation of the system; and,
     o Based on the county-wide outreach assessment that was conducted by LAHSA, build upon the outreach portion of CES to be more inclusive of all of the teams doing outreach in each respective SPA and expand their reach to ensure that all areas within Los Angeles County are receiving outreach services, while minimizing duplication.

   - Expand the functionality of the database that is supporting the Coordinated Entry System to ensure that it is continuously able to meet the needs of CES.

- Expand outreach to be more accessible, collaborative, geographically comprehensive, and proactive.
- Provide additional training as needed to build capacity within the Coordinated Entry System that includes but is not limited to: HMIS, Coordinated Assessments, the referral process, and other best practices that will support the continued growth and expansion of CES.

Administrative Structure of Countywide System

LAHSA will hire staff to be housed at LAHSA's main headquarters to develop, coordinate and manage the CES. In addition, each SPA will have CES staff to administer the program at the local SPA level. The SPA CES lead will be responsible for implementing efforts locally as directed by LAHSA's leadership.

Executive Structure

LAHSA will lead an executive team including leaders from DMH, DHS, DPH, DPSS, VA, City of LA, County of LA, and SPA CES leads. These leaders will provide guidance on building capacity within each SPA and other issues related to CES.

Community Partner and Stakeholder Participation

Regular community and government partner and stakeholder meetings will be facilitated by SPA CES staff to strengthen collaboration and to solicit input on the program. In addition, each SPA lead, in coordination with community and government partners, will develop a strategy to engage the necessary participants. This will foster an environment for continuous improvement and for overcoming barriers to success.

2. **Opportunities that Make this Proposed Strategy feasible (is this currently done elsewhere? is there legislation that makes this possible?)**

CES has been functioning to get people housed and out of homelessness for the past several years in the LACoC. It is an evidence-based practice and has been proven to make the best use of resources to achieve maximum impact. HUD has mandated the participation in CES for any CoC applying for funding.

3. **Barriers to implementing the proposed strategy and recommendation on how they can be resolved**

The barriers to implementing the proposed strategy would include the need for participation by all entities that are currently providing outreach and homeless services to be collaborative in their efforts. Sharing resources brings the fear that smaller programs will sometimes get lost in the process and thus there is a natural hesitation. There are also conflicting philosophies around the wide-spread use and implementation of the housing first model.

The SPA-level infrastructure must also be adequately funded to take on the expectations of coordinating services among an ever-expanding group of public and private partners in this effort. Insufficient resources for this coordination have thus far limited the ability to proactively integrate such partners.

It is also important to mention that the Youth CES is still in the pilot phases and has not been implemented county-wide as of yet.

4. Potential Performance Measures

- Number of people connected to health, mental health, substance abuse treatment and sources of income.
- Number of people connected to interim housing.
- Number of people permanently housed.
- Number of TAY connected to safe and stable housing.
- Time it takes to permanently house people experiencing homelessness (and any reductions in this time).

5. Potential funding stream(s)

- County Department existing resources
- LAHSA CES and ERT existing resources
- Veterans Administration
- ACA/Medi-Cal reimbursement

<div style="border:1px solid orange;padding:10px">

Potential Strategy 6.2
Create a Law Enforcement Training and Countywide Law Enforcement Protocol
Blueprint for Engaging Homeless on the Street and Encampments

</div>

1. Description of the proposed strategy

This potential two-prong strategy would create: 1) a training program and implementation plan for law enforcement throughout Los Angeles County, including but not limited to the LA County Sherriff's Department (LASD) and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD); and 2) a countywide protocol to address encampments/unsheltered homelessness.

The proposed training program would educate law enforcement about the complex and diverse needs of the unsheltered homeless population so as to better prepare law enforcement when interacting with people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The proposed training would emphasize awareness of, and strategies for dealing with, situations that arise among unsheltered homeless individuals due to an array of issues, most notably:

- Long-term, untreated (or inconsistently treated) mental illness
- Alcohol and/or substance abuse/addiction
- Comorbid substance abuse disorders and mental illness
- Physical health ailments
- Lack of sanitary conditions and regular healthcare

The proposed countywide encampment/unsheltered homelessness protocol would ensure L.A. County is responding to the crisis of encampments and unsheltered homelessness in a manner that both improves efficiencies across jurisdictional boundaries and guarantees more effective outcomes.

- **Target population(s):** Law enforcement agencies throughout LA County, and potentially other first responders (e.g. LA County Fire Department and city fire departments.)

- **Estimated cost:** 1) The cost of the training should take into account the development and implementation of the training program. The cost of the time spent by individual officers attending the training would be the responsibility of each law enforcement agency. 2) The cost for the development of a countywide encampment/unsheltered protocol should not be significant.

2. Opportunities that make this proposed strategy feasible (is this currently done elsewhere? Is there legislation that makes this possible?)

Los Angeles is not the only county grappling with the proliferation of homeless encampments. Many municipalities across the country are also dealing with the challenges that result from unsheltered homelessness. The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) recently released *Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments: Advancing the Dialogue*, a document intended to help cities and counties strategically plan in order to find cross-agency and cross-sector collaborative solutions to encampments.

USICH specifically recognizes that law enforcement plays a vital role in finding solutions to unsheltered homelessness, and therefore must be involved in the planning of intervention efforts. USICH also emphasizes the importance of standardizing approaches and aligning policies and procedures across programs and agencies to allow for effective responses.

Currently, there are opportunities that exist within LA County where certain jurisdictions are engaged in training of law enforcement and cross-agency collaboration. The Santa Monica Police Department (SMPD) employs a Homeless Liaison Program (HLP) model, committed to relationship building, networking, outreach, education, and enforcement. SMPD provides two training programs that are California Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) approved, as well as California Board of Behavioral Science (BBS) certified. The first training program is a 24-hour course titled "Homeless Outreach and Enforcement for Today's Communities", and the second is an 8-hour course titled "Mental Illness Awareness". The HLP model emphasizes collaboration with other city and county agencies, including the Santa Monica Fire Department, the Santa Monica Human Services Division (HSD), and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH).

Another current collaborative effort in LA County involves the LAPD and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). Currently, LAPD partners with LAHSA Emergency Response Teams (ERT) to identify and target high utilizers of emergency services on Skid Row, often chronically homeless individuals. These collaborative teams work to direct individuals to housing and services, and is funded through the Mayor's Innovation Fund.

In addition to the opportunities to learn from efforts within LA County, there are opportunities to learn from progress made in other cities and counties. In 2012, the City of St. Louis, Missouri published a report titled *Moving Forward: Policies, Plans and Strategies for Ending & Preventing Chronic Homelessness*. Three of the five sections of the report focus exclusively on how St. Louis approached a chronic encampment situation, including discussion of a formal encampment protocol that may prove useful in LA County.

3. **Barriers to implementing the proposed strategy and recommendation and how they can be resolved**

Potential barriers to implementing the training include jurisdictional challenges, namely whether or not different jurisdictions within LA County can agree on a training curriculum and implementation plan. One alternative that may reduce this barrier would be to pilot a training program with agencies that express the greatest interest, and evaluate its outcomes prior to any County-wide dissemination.

Jurisdictional challenges may also pose a barrier to implementing a County-wide law enforcement encampment/unsheltered homelessness protocol. Emphasis should be placed on collaboration across jurisdictions and across agencies.

4. **Potential performance measures**

Potential performance measures should focus on enhancing sensitivity in working with people experiencing unsheltered homelessness (and homelessness in general). Performance measures should also be centered on the overall reduction of encampments/unsheltered homelessness through collaborative and standardized efforts

that steer homeless individuals away from incarceration and towards appropriate housing and service interventions.

5. Potential funding stream(s)

- Cost of developing and delivering the training – to be determined
- Cost of receiving the training - will be covered by the respective law enforcement agency whose police force would be receiving the training.
- Cost of developing a protocol for addressing street homelessness and those living in encampments - minimal

Potential Strategy 6.3
Create a Uniform Decriminalization Policy (it is not a crime to be homeless)

The criminalization of homelessness has long been seen as a strategy to address some of the more visible aspects of homelessness; however, over the past few years, there has been an increased understanding that criminalization harms individuals and communities and in fact can make it more difficult to address homelessness. With new efforts by the Federal Government to encourage communities to roll back these measures, the County could take a leading role in promoting the decriminalization of homelessness throughout Los Angeles County. To achieve this, the County could: 1) ensure that the County does not disproportionately enforce existing County ordinances against homeless individuals; 2) support statewide efforts to decriminalize homelessness; 3) work with cities to develop a common set of policy recommendations and a resolution to promote decriminalization efforts, and/or 4) condition certain County funding streams on individual jurisdictions adopting policies consistent with these recommendations.

1. **Description of the Proposed Strategy**

   Proposed steps to promote decriminalization efforts in order to achieve uniform decriminalization across the county include:

   - *Decriminalization in the unincorporated areas of the County*

     The County could include, as part of its outreach and engagement strategies that involve law enforcement training and coordination, training that ensures that laws of general applicability are not disproportionately enforced against homeless individuals throughout the County. Given the reach of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department into 44 of the County's 88 cities plus the unincorporated area, as well as the goal to coordinate training for even more officers, the inclusion of anti-criminalization training has the potential to impact law enforcement's relationship with homeless individuals throughout the County.

   - *Support statewide efforts to create a uniform statewide approach to decriminalization*

     Just as regional efforts have the power to militate against a "race to the bottom," a statewide approach would eliminate this effect across California. Pending statewide legislation, SB 608, would afford homeless people the right to use public spaces without discrimination based on their housing status.[1] The County and cities could support this or similar legislation.

   - *Develop Policy Recommendations and a Resolution to Promote Decriminalization Efforts*

     The County could adopt a resolution supporting best practices for decriminalization, and encouraging cities within the County to adopt a similar resolution.

---

[1] SB 608, the Right to Rest Act, was introduced by Senator Liu in February 2015 and is currently pending in the legislature. Text of the bill is available at http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/15-16/bill/sen/sb_0601-0650/sb_608_bill_20150227_introduced.html.

- *Condition Certain County Funding Streams on the Adoption of Policies Consistent with These Recommendations*

Just as the United States government has incentivized the decriminalization of homelessness through the leveraging of funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the County could potentially condition or incentivize funding to cities based on decriminalization policies.

2. Opportunities that Make this Proposed Strategy Feasible (is this currently done elsewhere? is there legislation that makes this possible?)

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness has defined the criminalization of homelessness as "formal and informal law enforcement policies [that] are adopted to limit where individuals who experience homelessness can congregate, and punish those who engage in life-sustaining or natural human activities in public spaces."[2] Criminalization includes the passage and enforcement of laws that prohibit sleeping, eating, sitting, or panhandling in public spaces or sleeping in vehicles, as well disproportionate enforcement of other ordinances such as jaywalking and urinating in public against people who are homeless.[3]

The criminalization of homelessness has proliferated, as jurisdictions struggle to address the effects of the increasing number of people who live on the streets and in encampments.[4] While these measures may seem effective at eliminating outward signs of homelessness, this approach has significant consequences, both for homeless individuals and for communities that enact these ordinances and policing strategies. For example, homeless individuals who are cited or jailed for violations of these ordinances may face barriers to employment and housing as a result of these charges, and incarceration could lead to the disruption of employment, public benefits, healthcare, and the ability to access social services.[5] The seizure of a homeless person's property often results in their identification, medication, and other necessities of life being seized, which creates additional barriers for individuals attempting to move out of homelessness.

Criminalization can also be costly for communities. Criminalization places burdens on the already overtaxed criminal justice system and sends people to the already overcrowded jails. Cities that enact these ordinances are also frequently the subject of costly and drawn out litigation, resulting in injunctions against enforcement.[6] In August 2015, the United States Department of Justice submitted a statement of interest in a lawsuit against the City of Boise, arguing that ordinances that criminalize sleeping in public spaces where there is inadequate

---

[2] United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, "Searching out Solutions: Constructive Alternatives to the Criminalization of Homelessness" 2012 at p. 7.

[3] *Id.*

[4] *See* "California's New Anti-Vagrancy Laws: The Growing Enactment and Enforcement of Anti-Homeless Laws in the Golden State", University of Berkeley School of Law, Public Advocacy Clinic, February 2015.

[5] *See* Sawyer, Amy. "Criminalizing Homelessness is Costly, Ineffective, and Infringes on Human Rights", April 15, 2014, available at http://usich.gov/blog/criminalizing-homelessness.

[6] *See e.g., Desertrain v. City of Los Angele*s, 754 F. 3d 1147 (9th Cir. 2014); *Lavan v. City of Los Angeles,* 692 F. 3d 1022 (9th Cir. 2012). *See also Glover v. City of Laguna Beach*, 8:CV-01332 (C.D. Cal, filed Aug. 20, 2015).

shelter space constitutes a violation of homeless people's Eighth Amendment right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment.[7]

In addition, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development has for the first time included a community's affirmative efforts to decriminalize homelessness as a metric in evaluating which communities will receive FY 2015 Continuum of Care funding; the maximum incentive for decriminalization is given to Continuums of Care that demonstrate that 100% of the geographic area is covered by strategies that prevent criminalization.[8] In the Los Angeles Continuum of Care, the funding request will be over $91 million in funding for housing and homelessness services.

3. Barriers to Implementing the Proposed Strategy and Recommendation on how they can be Removed

There are obstacles to rolling back criminalization efforts on a community-by-community or jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis without additional regional or statewide incentives. Communities often adopt these measures in the first place to quell the tide of homeless individuals coming into their cities and towns from neighboring communities. If this happens, there can be a "race to the bottom," where each community increases enforcement an attempt to discourage people from staying in their communities. Once these measures are enacted, communities may be unwilling to take action to repeal these efforts unless others take similar steps.[9] While the large number of jurisdictions in Los Angeles County may present challenges to adopting a uniform decriminalization strategy, there are a number of steps the County could take to further the goal of creating uniform decriminalization across the County.

4. Potential Performance Measures

Because this strategy does not apply to a program or service, there are no performance measures to be included. The success will be measured by a reduction across the County in policies and practices which criminalize homelessness.

5. Potential Funding Stream(s) – N/A

---

[7] Statement of Interest of the United States, *Bell v. City of Boise*, Case No. 1:09-cv-540-REB, (Dist. Ct. Idaho), Dkt. # 276. This statement of interest relies heavily on the 2006 decision by the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in *Jones v. City of Los Angeles*, 444 F.3d 1118 (9th Cir. 2006) (vacated after settlement, 505 F.3d 1006 (9th Cir. 2007)).

[8] In its FY 2015 Notice of Funds Available for Continuum of Care programs, HUD has conditioned the award of 2 points out of a possible 200 in part on demonstrating that the jurisdictions in the Continuum of Care have implemented specific strategies that prevent criminalization of homelessness that include engaging and educating local policymakers and law enforcement. Applicants must describe how they are reducing criminalization of homelessness and the procedures they will use to market their housing and supportive services to eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, or disability who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach. Because the Continuum of Care program competition is highly competitive, conditioning 1% of the possible points on these strategies indicates HUD's seriousness about the problem of criminalization. *See* Notice of Funding Available for the 2015 Continuum of Care Program Competition, FR-5900-N-25 at p. 44. [9] *See* "California's New Anti-Vagrancy Laws: The Growing Enactment and Enforcement of Anti-Homeless Laws in the Golden State", University of Berkeley School of Law, Public Advocacy Clinic, February 2015, quantifying anti-homeless ordinances in 58 California cities, including 11 cities in Los Angeles County.

Potential Strategy 6.4
Forge a Countywide Outreach System which Effectively Coordinates the Vast Array of Current Outreach Efforts in the County

1. Description of the Proposed Strategy

The proposed strategy is to develop multidisciplinary and integrated street-based teams to identify, engage and connect and/or re-connect homeless individuals to interim and/or permanent housing and supportive services. These teams will include the following staff:

- **CES/Initial Case Management** – to conduct the standardized assessment of individuals (e.g. CES Survey Packet), ensure they are entered into HMIS, assist the individuals with obtaining required documents for housing and provide follow-up activities of all engagement efforts.
- **Health** – to assess all health-related issues, to connect individuals to primary health care and to coordinate care with primary health providers.
- **Mental Health** – to assess all mental health-related issues, to connect individuals to mental health care and to coordinate care with mental health providers.
- **Substance Abuse** – to assess all substance abuse-related issues, to connect individuals to treatment and to coordinate care with substance abuse providers.
- **LAHSA ERT** – to engage individuals and assist all team members in any follow-up activities as well as arranging for shelter/interim housing.

The following disciplines will be called upon using existing service providers in applicable geographic areas as needed:

- Veterans – to assist with any veterans identified, and to connect them to veteran-specific resources.
- TAY – to assist with any transition age youth identified, and to connect them to youth-specific resources.
- Family - to assist with any family identified, and to connect them to the Homeless Family Solution System (HFSS), the CES for homeless families in Los Angeles County.

A significant portion of the team composition can be leveraged from current outreach and engagement efforts that are outlined in Table II.

The teams will be organized using a Service Planning Area (SPA) based approach. There are about 28,000 individuals in Los Angeles County who are unsheltered on any given night. These teams will be distributed based on LAHSA's 2015 Homeless Count and the percentage of unsheltered individuals per SPA, with each team being responsible for a specific geographic area to ensure full SPA coverage.

Target Population(s) - Any individual, youth, or family experiencing homelessness that is encountered during outreach and engagement activities. Families identified will be directed to the HFSS.

Administrative Structure of Countywide System – LAHSA will hire staff to be housed at their main headquarters to develop, coordinate and manage the Countywide Street-Based

Outreach and Engagement System under the umbrella of CES. Additionally, each SPA has CES staff housed at the CES lead agency in the local community that can administer the program at the local SPA level. On behalf of each SPA, the SPA CES lead will be responsible for all traffic control of the teams responding to reports of homeless activity and ensure that there is no duplication of effort.

This structure will provide a strong framework for developing and managing a countywide system. This system will be responsible for coordinating, implementing and overseeing a network of outreach/engagement activities within each SPA, regardless of funding source.

Executive Structure – LAHSA will lead an executive team which includes leaders from DMH, DHS, DPH, DPSS, United Way, the City of LA and any of the other 87 cities. These leaders will provide guidance and assist in reducing barriers for homeless individuals who are working with a street-based team.

Community and Government Partner and Stakeholder Participation - Regular community and government partner and stakeholder meetings will be facilitated by SPA CES staff to strengthen collaboration and to solicit input on the program. In addition, each SPA lead in coordination with community and government partners will develop a strategy for how outreach efforts will be coordinated. For example, DMHs' SB 82 Mobile Triage Teams will be utilized specifically for mental health crises that cannot be managed by the standard outreach team.

This program provides an infrastructure within each SPA by which any of the 88 cities, community-based providers or others who are interested in participating in ending street-based homelessness can get involved. In addition, each SPA will be provided with a budget commensurate with geographic needs for developing a strategic and community-based plan for coordinating and integrating all local outreach and engagement efforts. This will allow SPAs the support needed to develop solutions unique to their communities.

Housing – This model is predicated on the idea that interim and permanent housing resources will be increased to meet the needs of the unsheltered street-based homeless for all of the target populations. To ensure the success of this program, immediate access to interim housing must be available as well as permanent housing opportunities.

Interim housing - A temporary site that includes one or more of the following: shelter, recuperative care, sober living, etc. It provides a staging place for individuals to secure permanent housing with needed supportive services. In addition, it is highly recommended that each SPA identify and/or implement Navigation Centers (similar to San Francisco's model) and Sobering Centers as points of entry for getting each individual stabilized in housing with the appropriate supportive services given their specific needs.

Permanent housing –The full range of permanent housing in each SPA including: resources available through public housing authorities, CES, DMH, VA and DHS' Housing for Health.

Hotline – Each SPA will have a hotline and website for reporting homeless encampments, individuals who are particularly vulnerable or any homeless-related issue. The hotline and website will be monitored by the CES SPA lead. If a report is sent to the incorrect SPA, the CES SPA lead will be responsible for routing the call/web report to the CES SPA lead for the correct SPA. Additionally, there may be a role for a countywide phone number and/or website

which could automatically route the person seeking to make the report to the correct SPA, based on zip code or address.

Each caller and web submission will be provided with an identification number. This number will allow utilizers of the system to track and receive updates on their submissions. In addition, the hotline will provide referrals and linkages to emergency and community-based resources 24/7/365. Hotline representatives will have access to a shelter bed inventory provided by HMIS, and will have the ability to verify and update bed availability as well as to link individuals to an appropriate shelter bed. The budget for these hotlines should include funding for transportation services.

Training – All SPA-based teams will be provided with initial and ongoing training related to the target population, roles and responsibilities of the teams and team building activities. A trainer hired by LAHSA will be provided to engage and maintain a dialogue with community organizations, businesses, home owner associations, etc. to inform them about how to make referrals, the CES system, and available resources. In addition, this trainer will assist in all aspects of training and staff development for the SPA teams.

TAY – Reducing the amount of time youth are homeless significantly reduces their exposure to physical abuse, sexual exploitation and violence, and mental health degradation. Ensuring that TAY have year-round access to youth-oriented interim and permanent housing and supportive services is essential. Leaders from Department of Children and Family Services, Probation Department, DMH TAY Division, LACOE Homeless Services, LAHSA and the youth service provider community must be engaged to create solutions that will meet the needs of TAY in the near future, as well as develop a more integrated youth system. This will enable:

- Enhanced coordination for TAY
- Identification of TAY "hotspots"
- Feedback from homeless/formerly homeless TAY to be integrated into planning processes
- Training specific to the TAY population

In addition, the effective outreach and engagement of TAY requires the development and integration of relevant and appealing outreach materials, on multiple platforms such as social media, web, print, etc. Resources should be made available to fund interagency and TAY-developed engagement strategies, as well as resources that will reduce barriers to the utilization of services for TAY.

2. **Opportunities that Make this Proposed Strategy Feasible (is this currently done elsewhere? is there legislation that makes this possible?)**

Street-based engagement for homeless individuals is well-documented as an evidence-based practice for assisting homeless individuals to transition from homelessness and reintegrate into the community. Most major metropolitan areas utilize street-based engagement teams, excellent examples of which can be found in Boston, Pittsburg PA, Seattle and Portland. Los Angeles also has examples of street-based outreach teams such as the Integrated Mobile Health Teams (IMHTs), the Multidisciplinary Integrated Teams (MITs) and the new C3 teams in Skid Row. This proposal would allow these types of teams to be taken to scale and have a significant impact on street homelessness.

There is no known legislation that promotes or hinders street-based engagement efforts.

3. **Barriers to Implementing the Proposed Strategy and Recommendation on how they can be Resolved**

There are no barriers to implementing the proposed strategy, other than identifying a funding source(s). It will likely be very welcome by all of the communities that are challenged by homelessness on their streets. It will be challenging to redirect existing resources to the teams as well as to align and coordinate various community-based outreach activities. However, it is critical that this be done to address the current fragmentation and duplication of existing outreach/engagement efforts.

4. **Potential Performance Measures**

- Number of contacts-duplicated and unduplicated.
- Number of people connected to health, mental health, substance abuse treatment, sources of income.
- Number of people connected to interim housing.
- Number of people permanently housed.

5. **Potential Funding Stream(s)**

- County Department existing resources
- LAHSA CES and ERT existing resources
- Veterans Administration
- ACA/Medi-Cal reimbursement

(See charts on the following two pages)

Countywide Street-Based Outreach and Engagement System Visual

Executive Steering Committee
**Leaders from LAHSA, DMH, DHS, DPH, DPSS, City of LA,
United Way, VA**

LAHSA-CES Administrative Team
**The Countywide Street-Based Outreach and Engagement System will be administered by
LAHSA.**
SPA teams will be administered and managed by the SPA CES leads. LAHSA and CES leads
will facilitate all stake holder/coordination efforts in each SPA

| SPA 1 Street-Based Teams | SPA 2 Street-Based Teams | SPA 3 Street-Based Teams | SPA 4 Street-Based Teams |
| SPA 5 Street-Based Teams | SPA 6 Street-Based Teams | SPA 7 Street-Based Teams | SPA 8 Street-Based Teams |

Team Composition (in all SPAs)		
CES Staff	LAHSA ERT Staff	Mental Health Staff
Health Staff	Substance Use Staff	Peer Staff

* Most of the existing outreach/engagement teams do not all have the clinical resources required for the comprehensive street-based engagement described above. However, the coordination that will occur in each SPA will ensure that clinical services are available to all efforts.

Table of Current CES, DMH and ERT Outreach/Engagement Resources Per SPA

SPA	CES Provider	DMH Resources	ERT Provider	Other County Funded Efforts
SPA 1	AV Homeless Coalition	SB 82, Mental Health America MIT	LAHSA	
SPA 2	LA Family Housing	SB 82, San Fernando Valley Mental Health MIT, SFVMHC-Streets to Home	LAHSA	
SPA 3	Union Station	SB 82, Enki MIT	LAHSA	
SPA 4	LAMP	SB 82, HOME Team, Step-Up on Second MIT, Exodus-IMHT	LAHSA	C3 (Skid Row specific)
SPA 5	St. Josephs	SB 82, OPCC/LAMP MIT, St. Joseph and OPCC-IMHT	LAHSA	
SPA 6	SSG	SB 82, HOME Team, SCHARP MIT	LAHSA	St. Joseph-RV Outreach, PATH-South Bay COG Outreach
SPA 7	PATH	SB 82, Enki MIT	LAHSA	PATH-Gateway Connections
SPA 8	Harbor Interfaith	SB 82, MHA MIT, MHA-IMHT	LAHSA	PATH-Gateway Connections, PATH-South Bay COG Outreach

> ## Potential Strategy 6.5
> ### *Create a Definition of Outreach and Engagement; Referral versus Connection to Services and Housing*

1. **Description of the Proposed Strategy**

   The proposed strategy addresses the need for additional resources and coordination of County-wide outreach and engagement of unsheltered County residents living on the streets and in encampments; and it provides a clear definition of both outreach and engagement, which are included at the end of this strategy brief.

   - **Target Population(s):** the proposed definitions of outreach and engagement were developed for use by all service providers, funders, city and county leadership, and policy makers.

   - **Estimated cost per person:**

     N/A

2. **Opportunities that Make this Proposed Strategy Feasible (Is this currently done elsewhere? Is there legislation that makes this possible?)**

   There is currently great political will and support in the County to move homeless individuals and families off the streets and into shelter/housing and supportive services. In order to be successful with this effort, outreach and engagement needs to be conducted with a clear understanding of what it means to conduct outreach and engagement.

   Currently, there are more outreach and engagement teams in the County than ever before and if these teams all work under a unified definition of outreach and engagement their success rates and coordination will be enhanced.

   There are local and national resources available that address the working definition, goals, and best practices regarding outreach and engagement of homeless persons:

   - United Way Home for Good: http://homeforgoodla.org/   Standards for Excellence http://homeforgoodla.org/our-work/standards-of-excellence/
   - United States Interagency Council on the Homeless: "Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments" http://usich.gov

3. **Barriers to Implementing the Proposed Strategy and Recommendation on How they can be Resolved**

   N/A

4. **Potential Performance Measures**

   N/A

5. Potential Funding Stream(s)

N/A

DEFINITION OF OUTREACH:

Outreach is the critical first step toward locating and identifying a homeless person who is not otherwise contacting a government agency or service provider who can connect him/her to available services and housing resources. Outreach is a means for educating the community about available services, in this case for homeless individuals and families. Outreach is also a process for building a personal connection that may play a role in helping a person improve his or her housing, health status, or social support network.

An effective outreach worker/team knows: 1) the purpose and goals of the outreach; and 2) the services and housing options that s/he can actually access. The outreach worker/team needs to be clear and transparent with the homeless person regarding the purpose of their outreach and the minimum requirements to which the homeless person needs to adhere in order to be eligible to receive services or housing resources The outreach worker/team needs to inform individuals of the purpose and goal(s) of the outreach visit such as to complete an assessment survey; to warn encampment dwellers that they must move or secure their property due to an upcoming "clean-up" of the encampment and when the clean-up will take place; to get someone into treatment first and that going into treatment *could* possibly lead to other benefits like housing, SSI, etc. An outreach worker/team should never promise resources to which they do not have immediate access at the time of their visit.

GOALS/OUTCOMES OF OUTREACH:

 ➤ Identify individual homeless people (Conduct VI-SPDAT assessment when possible)
 ➤ Assess immediate needs and link individuals to services and shelter
 ➤ Provide transport and assist with obtaining ID, income verification, SSA card

DEFINITION OF ENGAGEMENT:

Engagement, when conducted properly, is a process that establishes a trusting relationship that can lead to a homeless person's participation in services and housing. The process begins after the initial outreach contact. The engagement process can take weeks to months. There is no standard timeline for successful engagement and an outreach worker/team should never be discouraged by initial rejections of their offers to assist a homeless individual. If an agency's policies and resources do not allow for this time and consistent/persistent effort, the worker will more often than not fail at building the necessary relationship and the homeless person will likely not trust the next outreach worker/team who tries to engage them and offer housing and services.

Effective engagement requires: consistency, reliability, predictability, persistence, and patience. The outreach worker/team needs to be clear, honest, and realistic about goals, expectations, and available resources.

Key points of successful Engagement

 ➤ Each encounter with a person is valuable, quality time to further develop the relationship.

- ➢ Bring value! Advocate! Link people to resources. Demonstrate that you care and that you can help them navigate the systems and that you'll be there to assure their needs are addressed.
- ➢ Celebrate success and accomplishments (no matter how small!!).
- ➢ Inspire and reward moves toward accomplishing change; change is hard and can be threatening; part of building trust is creating a sense of safety as people step away from their comfort zone and routine.
- ➢ Work as a team to ensure flexibility, responsiveness, and reliability; a team should not have more than 3 people seeking to engage the same person.

GOALS/OUTCOMES OF ENGAGEMENT:

- Development of a trusting relationship that facilitates movement toward establishing and transitioning into a home.
- Using Housing First strategies to assist individuals in obtaining and transitioning into permanent housing.
- Link to and follow through with obtaining benefits.
- Assist with identifying appropriate health care and behavioral health treatment.

<div style="border:1px solid orange; text-align:center;">

Potential Strategy 6.6
Develop a Method for Sharing Real Time Data/Tech- Mapping of the Homeless Population and Outreach Services Across the County

</div>

1. **Description of the Proposed Strategy**

    This proposed strategy suggests a process to geographically map the homeless population and share real time data among homeless services agencies, and agencies that come into contact with the homeless. Geo-mapping is an invaluable tool in assessing the needs of the homeless in order to develop effective services and housing plans for homeless individuals and families.

    The goal of the proposed strategy is to build upon the outreach module within the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to include a mapping function that will be used by outreach workers county-wide. In addition, the strategy aims to develop an application that will allow agencies that come into contact with the homeless (e.g., Department of Public Works, law enforcement, LA City Bureau of Street Services, etc.) to upload encampment locations to HMIS for mapping purposes or to request outreach services.

    HMIS is currently administered by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) and has been in use by the majority of agencies administering programs that are conducting homeless outreach. HMIS provides a vehicle for sharing information amongst organizations within the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LACoC). HMIS has recently been expanded to include a module that is dedicated to capturing outcomes of outreach services so that real-time data and information being collected and used by outreach workers can be easily tracked and shared to allow for more effective coordination of services.

    The outreach module of HMIS is functional and can be accessed through an online interface on a tablet. This module currently uses manually input addresses to identify location, but can accommodate a mapping function as well, so that geographic locations do not need to be manually input and are stored in the correct format for digitization. It will also allow for the tracking of migration of the homeless population both within the LACoC and into, and out of, the LACoC.

    In addition, it is recommended that an exploration be conducted to evaluate the merit of developing an application for non-outreach agencies that frequently come into contact with homeless encampments to map and request outreach services as necessary. This application should interface with the existing HMIS system.

2. **Opportunities that Make this Proposed Strategy Feasible (is this currently done elsewhere? is there legislation that makes this possible?)**

    Adding a mapping feature to the existing HMIS infrastructure is very feasible. Implementing new technology outside HMIS would be more costly, and would also take much longer to be readily available, as there would be a need to develop, test, and create policy around administration and mandates on usage. Also, the agencies currently using HMIS already have consent forms that allow for the sharing of this data. This allows the administering

agency to generate usage reports, while also using analysis of the already-existing data to build policy and program based on known best practices.

Developing an application that would allow agencies that frequently come into contact with the homeless is not a new technology and could be designed to interoperate with HMIS.

3. **Barriers to Implementing the Proposed Strategy and Recommendation on How they Can be Resolved.**

The amount of information that can be recorded is endless. Privacy issues pose a challenge as to what can be asked and displayed. Further analysis regarding the recording and sharing of the specific location of the homeless would also need to be conducted.

Policies should be developed that outline which data points should be included or shared (i.e., single person vs. an encampment) and clearly define who can access this information.

4. **Potential Performance Measures**

Many different performance measures can be developed with the expansion of data sharing and the ability to geographically map outreach efforts. One example would be the ability to reduce the duplication of services due to the ability to access the real-time geographic locations of outreach efforts in a rapid manner. In addition, having the ability to visually see where outreach teams and other agencies are providing services and/or coming into contact with the homeless will give policy makers the ability to modify or develop strategies based on these data sets.

5. **Potential Funding Stream(s)**

- County Department existing resources
- LAHSA CES and ERT existing resources
- Veterans Administration