

**California State Association of Counties (CSAC)-League of California Cities (League)
Joint Homelessness Task Force (HTF)
Meeting Notes - September 23, 2016**

Attendance

Members: Stephany Aguilar (Co-Chair), Oscar Villegas (Co-Chair), Eric Guerra, James Vanderbilt, Jacky Morales-Ferrand, Jim Holgersson, Yibin Shen, Damon Connolly, Phil Ansell, Greg Devereaux, Cindy Cavanaugh, Elizabeth Pianca, Robert Bendorf, Jeff Brown, Sam Dodge, Susan Filios on behalf of Kathy Miller, Matt Cate, Dan Carrigg

Staff: League: Jennifer Whiting, Jason Rhine, Alison Leary CSAC: Darby Kernan, Kiana Valentine, Farrah McDaid-Ting, Chris Lee, Stanicia Boatner, Elizabeth Marsolais

Meeting Notes

I. Welcome & Introductions

Task Force Co-Chairs Stephany Aguilar and Oscar Villegas opened the meeting with introductions of the task force members and other attendees of the meeting. They shared their thoughts on what brought them to the table and how homelessness has impacted them personally and their community. They also discussed that homelessness is a priority issue for the League of California Cities (League) and California State Association of Counties (CSAC).

II. Framing the Issue: Why Are We Here?

League staff Dan Carrigg discussed how, already, legislators and state administrators are interested in what is developed by the HTF. HTF members then shared information on their individual communities, what is working, and what they hope the task force will accomplish. Discussion included:

- Anaheim is working on a project that creates a location to consolidate services to the homeless population, looking at each case individually, and having a homeless “Czar”. Other HTF members showed interest in learning more about how these projects were being funded.
- San Francisco City and County have had success with veterans working with Veterans Affairs (VA) and Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD). They have focused on supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and outreach. They have formed a new department that centralizes services, resource constraint, and navigation centers (two online with a third in the process). The Board of Supervisors has charged the City/County to open six.
- Santa Clara County has been looking at the legal mechanics of getting things done. In addition, they have a \$950 million GO bond measure for supportive housing on November ballot.
- San Jose is focused on supportive housing and the Housing First model. San Jose has 500 apartments coming online – development wait time of three years. San Jose is focusing on doing something today to address active homelessness. Essential services: showers, modular housing, converting and buying motels, working with faith community. The City also sponsored legislation (AB 2176) which establishes a pilot program in the City of San

Jose to operate a “emergency bridge housing community” that will provide housing for homeless persons in any new or existing facility during a city-declared shelter crisis.

- San Bernardino County has many programs and providers but they were not very well coordinated so they hired a consultant to help coordinate. They focused on veterans first (400+ people) and identifying resources to eradicate barriers. The results were promising: they housed over 700 veterans and have seven entities putting housing navigators together creating more permanent housing for example motels, apartments, etc. Even with those results, more needs to be done to address chronic homelessness and strengthen cross-jurisdictional relationships.
- Los Angeles County has \$1.2 million bond measure on November ballot to address homelessness. The County is working with cities to better coordinate services.
- The City of Los Angeles is challenged by the varying needs of homeless individuals, and are working to coordinate with the County and joint powers authority. LA has implemented creative strategies with a county-city partnership including showers, storage of individual’s property, safe park team, and a navigation center. They believe coordination is very important. There is a countywide \$1.2 million bond on the November ballot, and 80% goes to permanent supportive housing.
- Placer County has brought in a homeless consultant to engage in planning process with cities. They are prioritizing resources: Section 8 vouchers for homeless, use of Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding stream, whole person application, a focus on seriously mentally ill homeless individuals, work with probation to target individuals, support emergency shelters. They are supportive of and working on Housing First. The County continues to be challenged due to community opposition to emergency shelters and the needs for housing funds.
- Yuba County has struggled with the best way to address the issue, but people have shown they are committed to doing what it takes. A diverse group of community members wanted to help with homeless in two cities. They are focused on “CAO” – Commitment-Accountability-Outcome, and have built a community of 14 tough sheds with onsite services available. They have also met with a group of homeless individuals about their needs, and the meeting provided great information for community leaders. Biggest challenge: How do we take formal stock of what we have?
- San Joaquin County is working with a variety of county officials and law enforcement to take a look at homelessness in the county. They expect to bring forth policy recommendations in November.
- Santa Monica has a long standing task force with law enforcement, social services, and public open space representatives. The City spends a lot on homelessness: attention, services and law enforcement. They also offer family reunifications services. The strain on services continues. The City has a huge docket of homelessness criminal cases (1,000+).
- Marin County has been working on improving the city and county partnerships on homelessness. They have a homeless czar in San Rafael and established Homeless Outreach Teams (HOT). Mental health has three mobile crisis units on the street. Addressing criminal justice issues has proven to be key and they received a grant from the Chronic Alcohol with Justice Initiative. A lot of this comes back to housing. Marin is having a Laura’s Law discussion and debate. The big issue is where to site services? Looking at creating a multi-service center, and very interested in the housing first model.

- Yolo County is implementing efforts to provide temporary housing in addition to wrap around services to chronically homeless folks. Collaborative effort between housing advocates, behavioral health, law enforcement and other county providers. They had teams that went out to encampments and staff got to know each individual. Fifty people took advantage of the opportunity to move into permanent housing. The project was called Bridge to Housing.

III. **The Statewide Homeless Picture**

Ben Metcalf, Director of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) provided a presentation about the statewide efforts to address homelessness in California and walked through the state's plan on developing and implementing the No Place Like Home (NPLH) Initiative. Director Metcalf's powerpoint presentation is available on the League and CSAC websites and will be available on the Institute for Local Government's (ILG) website once the HTF joint website becomes live.

There was a question and answer period with Director Metcalf with many questions focused on the process, regulations, and implementation of the NPLH program. Director Metcalf was open for local government input into the regulatory process. HCD wants to get through the publishing of guidelines phase and then happy to take feedback from city and county partners. There was discussion around Continuum of Care (COC) plans as well. Director Metcalf did clarify that NPLH applications must be inclusive of the county. There was discussion around this effort of breaking down silos and working together. Lisa Bates, the Deputy Director at HCD discussed efforts around Whole Person Care through Medicaid services that provides an opportunity to link health and housing services.

LA County representatives discussed the property tax bond that will be on the November 8th ballot and asked Director Metcalf what he thinks might be coming next at the state level. Director Metcalf talked about the Governor's Multifamily Housing By-Right proposal and that at the time there were 42 bills on the Governor's desk focusing on housing alone. The homeless topic is compelling.

IV. **Identifying Challenges & Opportunities: Facilitated Group Discussion**

Martin Gonzalez, Executive Director of the ILG, lead a group discussion centered on four questions:

1. What's resonating with you? What's missing?
2. How does what you've read and heard today compare to your personal experience?
3. What challenges do you foresee local governments facing as they work to address homelessness in their community?
4. What opportunities are emerging for local governments actively working to address homelessness in their community?

The results of this brainstorming session are being organized and will be distributed prior to the next meeting.

V. **Local Homelessness Programs: Challenges and Opportunities**

Cindy Cavanaugh, Sacramento County Homeless Director and Emily Halcon, City of Sacramento's Homeless Services Coordinator, gave a joint presentation on the City and County of Sacramento's efforts on combatting homelessness. Their powerpoint presentation is available

on the League and CSAC websites and will be available on the ILG website once the HTF joint website becomes live.

Cindy Cavanaugh reported that chronic homelessness in the County is increasing and, while there is not a lot of good data, they estimate 5,000 people a year in and out of homelessness. County homeless services cost a total of \$40.05 million annually. Collaboration between city and county elected officials has been empowering to staff. The County is interested in managing impacts and looking at homelessness from the system level to look at investment impacts. They are exploring why the chronic homeless population is growing and evaluating ordinances and lessons learned to use moving forward. Ms. Cavanaugh identified several challenges the County is facing: how county services work is not very clear; funding and interventions are not coordinated; less ownership and accountability; and strategic vision more focused at the city level than the county. Ms. Cavanaugh had to help a homeless person get services and shelter and she learned firsthand about the lack of coordination, complications of the system, and difficulties in acquiring the services.

Emily Halcon reported that homelessness in the City of Sacramento costs the City \$13.6 million annually. The City is actively working to address homelessness in Sacramento because they recognize the impact it has on the City. Their strategies include: pit stop restroom, shelters, etc. The concentration of homeless individuals in the City feels intense and Sacramento is working on the relationships with law enforcement, business, and local churches. The City's challenges include managing homelessness day to day, impacts of unsheltered homeless population, and collecting data. They are also working to identify ongoing funding for crisis services such as shelter space, detox programs, and pit stop restrooms. The City has become concerned with public feedings and is working to engage the organizations that provide free food to do it in productive ways and different from current practices. Sacramento's 311 call-in center has received 4,200 calls related to homelessness and the police department has picked up 4,000 cubic yards of debris. Sacramento does have a camping ordinance, but only enforce when they have to. They have implemented an impact team with law enforcement which includes a lieutenant, sergeant, psychologist or social worker aligned with homeless navigators with their focus on bringing services and deescalating situations with the homeless and mental health populations in Sacramento.

Following the presentation, members of the HTF focused on long term planning and data collection. Both Sacramento City and County have done long term analysis. Sacramento County has done a 10 year plan and the City has a continuum of care (COC) plan and has done a performance analysis of services. Both add value to the work on homelessness.

In response to the presentation, several HTF members shared what their jurisdictions are doing to address some of the challenges and issues raised in the presentation:

- Los Angeles County has done a study document of actual costs in Los Angeles County. Six departments looked at 7,500 single adults who were the highest utilizers of services among the homeless population. LA County then targeted services and subsidies to this population. They are evaluating the services received and tracking costs for this population. Goal is to reinvest savings back into best services for population.
- San Jose is adding collaboration between the City and the County. Last year the San Jose mayor created a subcommittee of city council members to focus on homelessness issues. The committee is made up of two city council members and two county

supervisors who meet to talk about homelessness. Work has centered on better coordination of law enforcement support, plan for NPLH, role of public housing authority, role of shelters, pilot “Front End” which implements the COC plan to lower barriers for the homeless population. The City, County, and Sutter Health funded a local rapid rehousing program – hired landlord liaison, 24/7 housing mediation, case management, rental assistance, establish damage fund, establish local employment services.

- Yuba County took a look at environmental impacts of homelessness. The costs are incredible and suggested that other counties take environmental impacts into account when addressing homelessness.

VI. Determining HTF Outcomes and Defining Success: Identifying the Knowledge, Resources, and Tools Needed to Prevent Assist, and Reduce the Number of Homelessness in California

Martin Gonzalez, Executive Director of the ILG, lead a group discussion centered on four questions:

1. When the work of the HTF is completed, what does success look like to you?
2. What are two or three outcomes you would like the HTF achieve?
3. What does the HTF need to know about homelessness to be prepared to issue a report and make recommendations?
4. What resources and tools do we need to study / explore as part of our work?
5. What perspective(s) do we need to bring forward to ensure our work is thorough and complete?

The results of this brainstorming session are being organized and will be distributed prior to the next meeting.

VII. Next Steps

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 28, 2016 at 11:00 am in Los Angeles. CSAC/League staff will prepare agenda and questions based on the results of the brainstorming sessions.