



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HOMELESSNESS

CALED CONFERENCE  
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# COST OF HOMELESSNESS

- California HCD Estimate: 130,000 homeless (25% of total United States population)
- United Way Study: \$299 million spent on homelessness in Orange County alone
- Significant public dollars spent on police services and emergency medical services
- Places strain on the General Fund; diverts funding away from local services
- Cost to taxpayers and businesses is higher than the limited benefits provided
- Factors such as rising cost of housing, stagnant wages, and the opioid addiction epidemic likely to increase populations without long-term solutions

# IMPACTS TO BUSINESSES

- Increases in crime and disruption to local business activity
- Increased perception regarding lack of safety or economic viability
- Decreased commercial rental values and property values
- Decreased foot traffic from consumers and storefront vacancies
- Discourages investment from the private sector
- Lack of action can lead to sustained economic stagnation

# Assessing the Problem

- Point-in-Time Count data and field surveys to understand your population and their service needs
- Meet with business and community leaders to understand challenges and opportunities
- Establish a working group comprised of city representatives, local nonprofits, businesses, faith-based groups, law enforcement, neighboring cities, and community stakeholders
- Develop strategies to address service issues of your homeless population and bring multiple resources to bear on chronic homelessness

# DIRECT OUTREACH

- Law enforcement alone cannot provide solutions as recent court ruling have limited the ability of local governments to enforce anti-camping laws
- Contract with organizations such as City Net and Mercy House as first responders to triage issues and respond to problems using existing networks and resources
- Organizations that specialize in homeless outreach provide valuable insights and assistance to cities
- Direct outreach opens the doors for communication and services including transitional and permanent housing through nonprofits and local agencies
- Connect local Homeless Action Committee to direct outreach efforts; including neighboring cities in these efforts

# WORKING WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES

- Develop toolkit of best practices to inform local businesses about what to do when encountering homeless including available resources
- Meet with your Chamber of Commerce and business organizations to discuss interaction with homeless population
- Work with direct outreach providers and law enforcement and talk to your homeless residents regarding trespassing and loitering on private property
- Create opportunities for direct outreach providers and local businesses to provide employment opportunities

# HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- Housing-First Initiative
- Permanent Supportive Housing Projects with onsite services
- Partnerships with Apartment Owners and Affordable Housing Developers
- Funding Opportunities (HUD, HCD, SB2, tax credits, and private equity)
- State Density Bonuses and Inclusionary Housing Ordinances



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

- Reducing the number of unsheltered homeless ensures vibrancy of downtown commercial corridors and encourages reinvestment
- Investment in affordable housing projects is less costly than law enforcement and emergency medical services that do not address homelessness
- Affordable Housing Projects that include mixed tenancy help meet demand for housing and create new consumers in your trade area
- Well-designed infill affordable housing projects attract new investment and development opportunities including market rate housing and commercial centers

# SUMMARY

- Understanding the homeless population in your community will help you develop programs and create funding opportunities
- Direct outreach providers should work collaboratively with law enforcement to offer services and programs available through the County and nonprofit networks
- Discuss with your local businesses how to approach this issue and ways in which they may participate in programs to offer employment opportunities
- Housing-First programs that create permanent supportive housing are the best long-term solution
- More funding available today for housing programs than ever before which creates opportunity for mixed-tenant projects (PSH and Low-Income Tenants)
- Reducing homeless creates new affordable housing and infill development opportunities and increases viability of local economic development