

## Mid Wilshire, November 20, 2003

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Input session was held at Beyond Shelter, 520 S Virgil Ave, with about 55 persons in attendance. Representatives of the Mayor of Los Angeles' Office and Blue Ribbon Committee Member Tyrone Roy,

Speaker	Topic	Comments
Candace Whalen, Hope-Net food pantries	Grass roots experience	27% of food bags go to homeless people with no cooking facilities. Mid-Wilshire homeless report they are avoiding drugs and crime downtown. Homeless people in our neighborhood are often precariously housed in housing they can't afford, and can't stay housed when any crisis hits them, since they have no cushion.
Nancy Spear, Hope-Net	Spanish Speaking population and affordable housing	Vincente, a taxi driver, had a place to live, but his wife has cancer and his daughter has a baby, and now all are living in a car, at risk of losing possessions in storage. Friend at 3 <sup>rd</sup> and Rampart. Has a job. Building has been sold, and rent increase for his 1-bedroom just increased 40%. In the unit are his wife, 3 children, and his parents, brother, and sister. He could not afford "suitable" housing. Recommendations: Build truly affordable housing and have service providers respond to those they serve with respect and humanity, person-to-person, not bureaucratically.
Gretta King-Smith, BlackSmith Records	Personal story	I was homeless for 3 years, My CalWORKs was messed up and it took the 3 years to get SSI for my emphysema. I was not helped because my son was a teenager, and I was not addicted, mentally ill or a domestic violence victim. Winter Shelters were much worse than sleeping in the car.
Harrison Soberanis, People Helping People	Vouchers for Houses for Families	The Plan must focus on family housing and getting the homeless families out of the danger and exploitation of downtown and slum-condition hotels and motels. Create 2-year city-funded section 8-style subsidies from the housing trust fund, conditional on family participating in case management.
Tamara Taleebah Sisters Community Housing & Center for the Blind	Special Populations	I became homeless due to foreclosure, and was a blind senior. I know the agencies, but did not get the help I needed for 3 months. Landlords win in court. I could not get a security deposit and rent assistance.
Albert Plunkett & Kristie Johnson Hollywood CAN	Jobs	There should be a tax credit for employers who hire the homeless, and there should be payee protection to help disabled people stay in their housing. People with jobs don't have to use shelters.
Mike Miller, LA CAN	Stable housing	I get SSI and have been homeless. The downtown hotels won't let me be a stable resident even with my SSI income ("28 day shuffle") The plan must have affordable stable housing. The new governor should support the plan.
James La Crax, Hollywood CAN	Trouble in shelters	Mass Shelters on cots are a terrible place to be with health hazards and its hard to sleep there. I am here, not in my native So. Dakota because of the weather and people flock here because of the Hollywood factor. I prefer to be outside.
Cesar Lopez, Hollywood CAN	Post release planning	I was released from state prison with nowhere to go and no job, no backup, no nothing. EDD did not help me. I needed a mailbox. I needed help to get a job. Parolees with no place to go on the street create an unsafe environment. How could I get a job and apartment in 30 days? There should be a trust fund to help parolees make a transition into the community.
Dolly Allison, South Central Homeless Assistance Referral Program	Cleaning up old records	We were helping a man, who got a job and apartment, but lost it when they did a background check and found a past arrest record. We do services to help people get jobs, they are succeeding, then they lose everything and the vicious circle starts all over. Funding requirements that people prove they are homeless by staying in a shelter make it impossible to do homeless prevention with people on the brink. Agencies must coordinate and share resources, and must
Dallas Legan, Bell Shelter Transitional Housing resident	Individual transition plans	Shelters and other service providers must be held accountable for results. I don't mean to offend, but to get people out of homelessness they need individual plans. Some need education. Some need a job; some can't manage a job. Some need drug or mental health treatment. This planning should be done promptly without delay so people are working toward the right goal for them.
John Farron, HCAN	Public	Hire homeless people for WPA public service jobs. Let us rebuild the infrastructure, and also

	Employment	use homeless people to inspect and manage newspaper racks on the streets.
Jered Elmore, Hollywood SDA Church	Access to services	I found a client in my neighborhood a job in Inglewood, but no way to get him there. People need access, information, and transportation. The system is inadequate since some people become unmotivated, when they are treated as a “problem” rather than a “client” and their needs are not met.
Martha Gonzalez, LA Youth Network	Publicity	We need to advertise homeless and job-training services in free papers like LA WEEKLY. Also we need to use unused property for more childcare, affordable housing, jobs, and services.
Zed Null, PATH resident, prior to that New Image	Access to services	I am physically and mentally disabled. I was in an apartment 15 years. PATH is taking 3 months to certify my meds and diagnosis. Focus on prevention by putting non-violent offender in treatment instead of jail. But what they and I need is real housing.
Larry Bowden Vet’s So. Cal. Homeless	Veterans	There are good services for Vets if they get channeled to them, but many don’t. We are a disproportionate percent of the homeless. Shelters need standards and performance outcomes.
Tamera Neal, student, Azusa Pacific Un.	Homeless Children on Skid Row.	The children need to be a priority. A 4-year old, Christopher, in a shelter, wanted just to be held and have a moment of quiet. No stigma should apply to him. He can’t get out of his situation by himself. You must be his voice.
Nate Smith, student, Azusa Pacific Un., Intern, LACEH&H	Interfaith Council on Homelessness	Read a letter of support and encouragement from the Priest at St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral, who could not attend. I spoke to many people about the Plan. I spoke to an elderly churchman who wanted no part in this plan. He just wanted to routinely collect and distribute the canned goods for people at the church. We must focus on the dream, not the details.
Kali Baba Mietkowski, “Under the Bridges”	Responding immediately to needs	We distribute food to the homeless. We must show them respect. Often they get everything they own taken away—their prescription eyeglasses, their medications, their pets. There are no throwaway people. We must meet their needs.
Rambhoru Brinkman, ISKC, “Hari Krishna”	Caring for everyone	It is a duty to God to offer respect and service to everyone. But not all homeless can be accommodated who come to our temple. Many were well established until a misfortune put them and their families on the streets. We can’t always help. We need established organizations to work with. There must be a simple accessible system to serve them.
Arnold Pomerantz, “Under the Bridges”	Civil Rights	There are no civil rights on the street. The policy of LAPD is to harass them, move them on, take their things.
Luke Vincent, HCAN	Harassment for sleeping	The economy will not create enough jobs. A danger of a policy of ending homelessness is that the policy can be misused to force all homeless people into shelters, some of which are like prisons.
Luis M Lee III	Spiritual solution	The Bible can help people pull themselves up.
Tyrone Roy, Blue Ribbon Panelist	Focus on Solutions	Presenters are describing problems rather than proposing solutions. Propose solutions!