

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Leadership Council for the City of San Diego Community Action Plan on Homelessness

From: Implementation Team

Date: May 5, 2020

Subject: Summary of Activity for the Meeting of April 20, 2020

The second meeting of the Leadership Council for the City of San Diego Community Action Plan on Homelessness (Action Plan) was held on April 20, 2020, via teleconference.

This memorandum summarizes the discussion that occurred, questions raised, and actions taken.

The members of the Leadership Council are identified in the table below.

All members attended.

City of San Diego	Mayor	Mayor Kevin Faulconer
San Diego City Council	Councilmember serving on the Regional Task Force on the Homeless	Councilmember Chris Ward
County of San Diego	County Supervisor serving on the Regional Task Force on the Homeless	Supervisor Nathan Fletcher
San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC)	President and Chief Executive Officer	Richard C. Gentry
Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH)	Chief Executive Officer	Tamera Kohler
Philanthropic Organization	Lucky Duck Foundation	Peter Seidler
Individual with Lived Experience	Voices of Our City Choir	John Brady
Business Representative	SDG&E	Mitch Mitchell

The members of the Interagency Implementation Team are identified in the table below.

All members attended.

City of San Diego	Chief of Homelessness Strategies & Housing Liaison	Keely Halsey
San Diego City Council	Chief of Staff for Councilmember Ward	Molly Chase
Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH)	Chief Executive Officer	Tamera Kohler
San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC)	Senior Vice President Homeless Housing Innovations Division	Lisa Jones

The content of the meeting predominantly focused on the efforts underway at the City and County level related to mitigating the spread of COVID-19 among both sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness.

The agenda included the following main topics:

- 2020 Point-in-Time Count
- Operation Shelter to Home
- Looking Ahead, including Strategies for State and Federal Funding Opportunities and the Plan for Future State Homeless Crisis Response System

2020 Point-in-Time Count

The Leadership Council received a presentation on the 2020 Point-in-Time Count, which was conducted at the end of January. The count identified a slight decrease in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the San Diego region on a given night. Highlights from this year's count included:

- High level of participation: There was a high level of participation from volunteers and partner agencies in conducting this year's count.
- Effective use of technology: Staff were able to utilize technology like drones and mobile apps to improve the effectiveness of the count. Drones helped identify individuals in otherwise hard-to-reach areas. This resulted in the most complete and accurate Point-in-Time Count to date.
- Improved engagement strategy: Increased engagement from persons with lived experience, particularly from persons living in vehicles, resulted in a more complete Point-in-Time Count.

Communication Strategy

The RTFH is developing a communication and outreach strategy for releasing data from the 2020 Point-in-Time Count. Heightened interest in receiving the data exists as jurisdictions strategize on how to allocate resources in response to COVID-19.

The Leadership Council commended the efforts made in collecting this data and urged everyone to continue with this momentum to help people experiencing homelessness during this time by implementing best practices and innovative solutions.

Operation Shelter to Home

1. **Background and Activity Overview**

The Implementation Team members provided a background and overview of Operation Shelter to Home. Operation Shelter to Home is a collaborative, system-wide coordinated plan to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among San Diegans experiencing homelessness. Staff initially took direction from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and analyzed the current homeless system to identify the greatest risk factors and available resources to address those risks. After considering a few locations, the San Diego Convention Center was identified as a temporary shelter in part because of the Convention Center's extensive experience in quickly scaling up large-scale projects, and due to ample space to achieve social distancing.

Individuals are moving into the Convention Center in planned phases. Participants at the Convention Center are provided with three meals a day and wraparound services, such as health services and case management.

The Implementation Team highlighted that some of the reasons for the success of the project are the willingness from staff to step up and work outside of their usual classification, the collaboration among the different agencies to implement the project, and the political support.

The Leadership Council lauded the progress that is being made and the innovative solutions that are being utilized at this time. It was noted that the opportunity exists to keep this momentum

going and make lasting impacts on San Diego's homeless system well beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

At a member's request, the Leadership Council provided direction to develop a communication strategy to share more information with the community on the positive work that is being done at the Convention Center, particularly on the innovative ways that City, County, SDHC and RTFH staff are supporting the efforts, on the basis that the positive information was previously unknown to the member and perhaps unreported via media and other standard channels of communication.

The Leadership Council also voiced support for implementing a system to collect feedback from individuals residing at the Convention Center that is anonymous and encourages honest feedback. Staff will explore different options and programs that are available, short- and long-term.

The Leadership Council raised the question of how the group plans to continue meeting the objectives of the Action Plan given the drastic changes in the environment from the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges that come with it. It was generally discussed that though the current system and circumstances have changed the overall objectives remain appropriate and as the situation evolves the Implementation Team will bring recommendations to the Leadership Council as needed to ensure alignment of the future system state with the outcomes and objectives of the plan.

The resulting action from this item was to develop a communication strategy to raise awareness of the work going on at the Convention Center and to explore feedback-collection software to implement at the Convention Center.

2. Exit Strategies

The Implementation Team provided a brief overview of the exit strategies that are being implemented. In addition to health screenings and supportive services, there is a focused effort to exit residents to sustainable housing. Staff from the RTFH Coordinated Entry System team and SDHC's Landlord Engagement and Assistance Program (LEAP) and Diversion program teams are working together to identify and match people with housing resources, such as housing vouchers, and place them in units. There is also a coordinated effort between the Housing Commission, the RTFH and the City of San Diego to identify and apply for local and federal funding opportunities to meet the needs of ongoing efforts.

The City is working with RTFH on a Call to Action to landlords to secure units that people who are matched with housing vouchers can access.

3. Hotel Acquisition

The City and SDHC are exploring the option to lease and acquire hotels/motels. More information will be shared once concrete next steps and details are established.

Looking Ahead

The Implementation Team is working to ensure that all current and expected funds are being leveraged. The team committed to improve on efforts to keep the community informed of the work going on at the Convention Center and expressed interest in utilizing the hotel/motels that may be acquired to expand their efforts in transitioning people to housing interventions.

Any Other Business

The Leadership Council raised the concern that with the stay-at-home order, the unsheltered population has more restricted access to basic essentials, such as phone charging, sanitation and hygiene, and food.

There is a safety concern around unsheltered food distribution that needs to be strategically resolved. The drive through food distribution model is working successfully because food can be distributed in a contactless way. This option is not available to distribute food to the unsheltered population, who do not have access to a vehicle. There needs to be a regional strategy around how to distribute food to the unsheltered population in a way that keeps everyone safe and healthy and adheres to the CDC guidelines. One suggestion was shared to prioritize unsheltered individuals at food banks to receive ready meals.

The unsheltered population also have limited areas to rest, as parks and public areas are closed, and access to other essentials such as charging their phones. Some of these issues will be challenging to resolve in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines. For example, allowing for phone charging stations may create difficulty in encouraging social distancing and practicing safe hygiene.

The resulting action from this item was to hold further smaller working group/calls in the week following the Leadership Council meeting, and report updates at the next meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will occur in mid-to-late July, depending on most members' availability.

Leadership Council

City of San Diego Community Action Plan on Homelessness

April 20, 2020

Welcome and Introductions

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. 2020 Point in Time Count
 - i. The Numbers
 - ii. Communication Strategy
3. Operation Shelter to Home
 - i. Background
 - ii. Activity Overview
 - iii. Exit Strategies
 - iv. Hotel Acquisition
4. Looking Ahead
 - i. Strategies for State & Federal Funding Opportunities
 - ii. Plan for Future State Homeless Crisis Response System
5. Representative Updates
6. Any Other Business
7. Next Meeting

2020 Point in Time Count

Objective

To collect data on the needs of people experiencing homelessness in our community, and increase awareness of homelessness and spark action.

- The Numbers
- Communication Strategy

Operation Shelter to Home

Background & Activity Overview

Objective

System-wide, coordinated response to help sheltered and unsheltered individuals remain healthy during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Collaboration between:

Regional Task Force on the Homeless

County of San Diego

San Diego Convention Center

Veterans Village of San Diego

City of San Diego

San Diego Housing Commission

Alpha Project

Father Joe's Villages

Goals

Near-Term Goals

- Successfully exit participants in Operation Shelter to Home
- Provide funding support to the Housing Navigation Unit
- Inform Housing Navigation Unit of new resources and interventions developed for implementation
- Create a shelter specific CES model

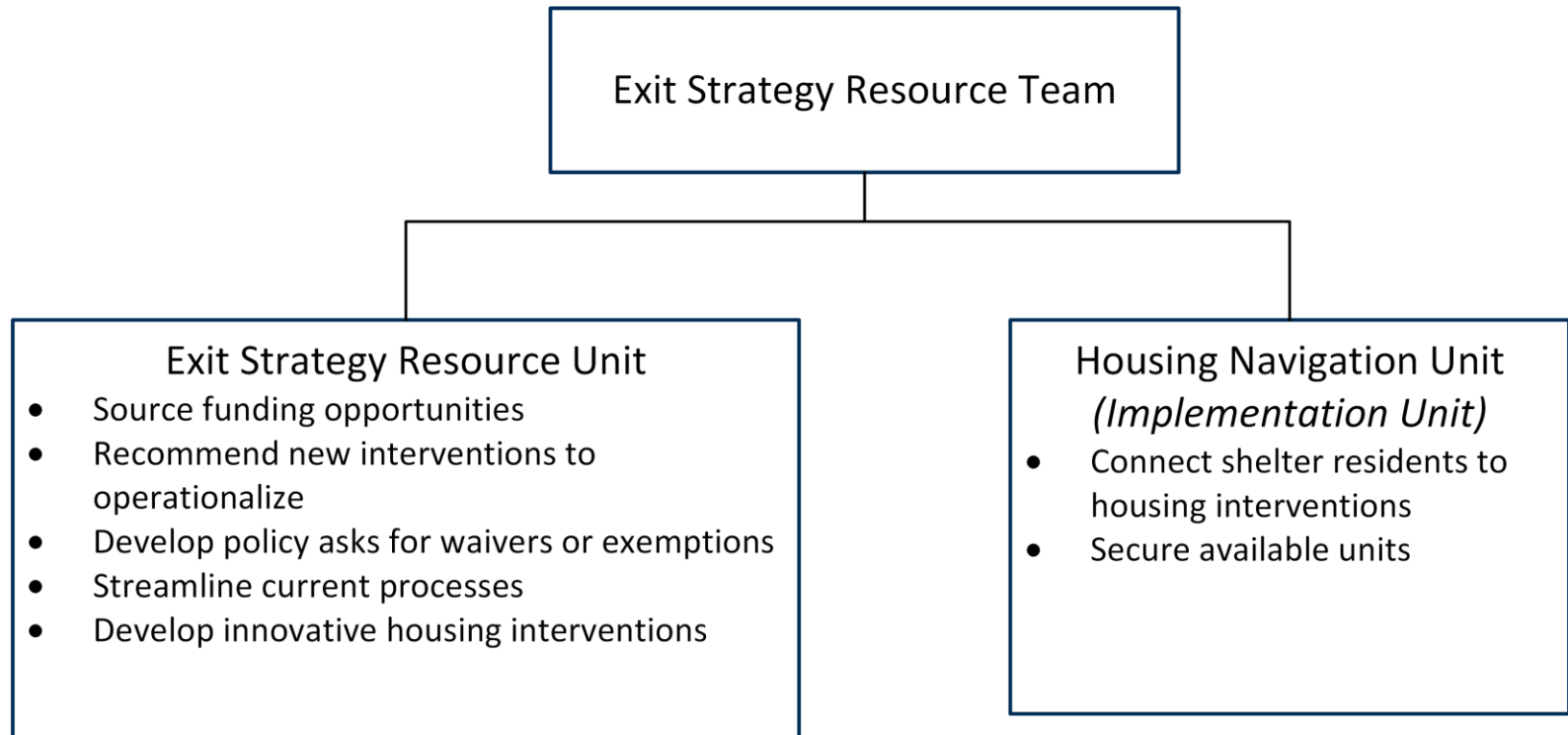
Medium-Term Goals

- Develop a single bed count system (bed management in HMIS) for shelter beds
- Eliminate wait lists for current shelters through a coordinated system of entry to shelter

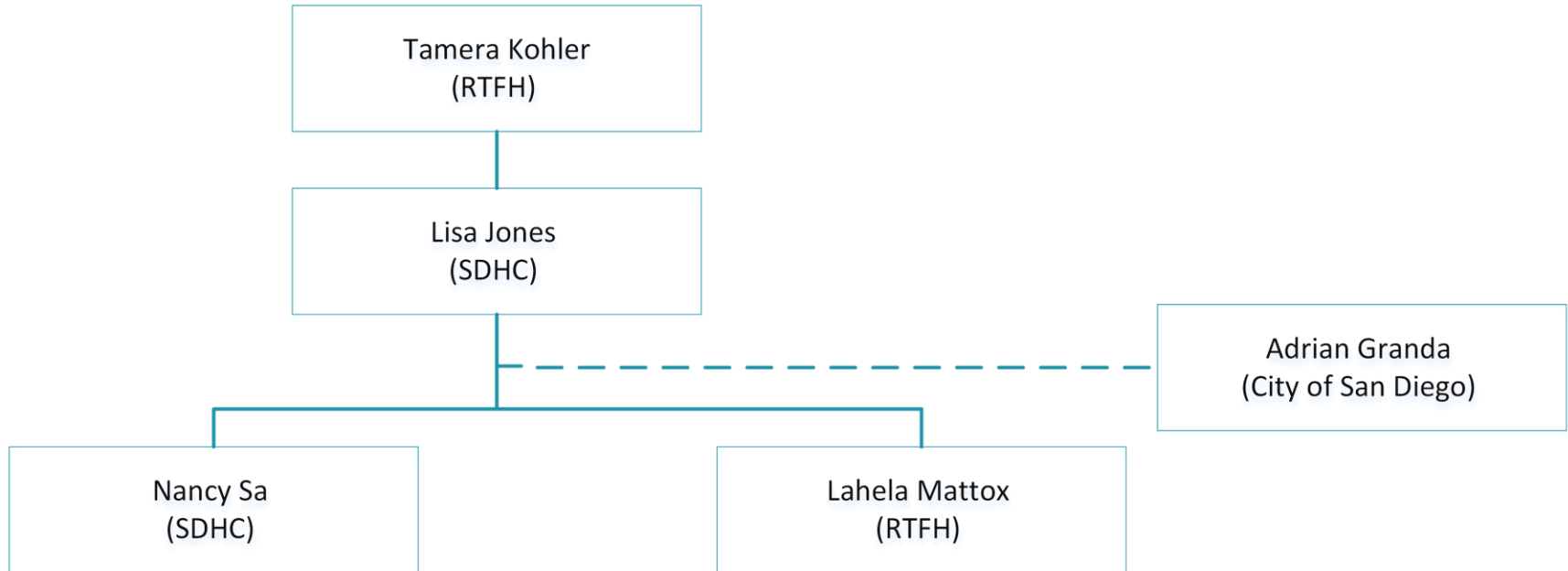
Exit Strategies

Exit Strategy Resource Team

Responsible for securing the housing/subsidy resources and supportive services needed to successfully exit residents into housing.



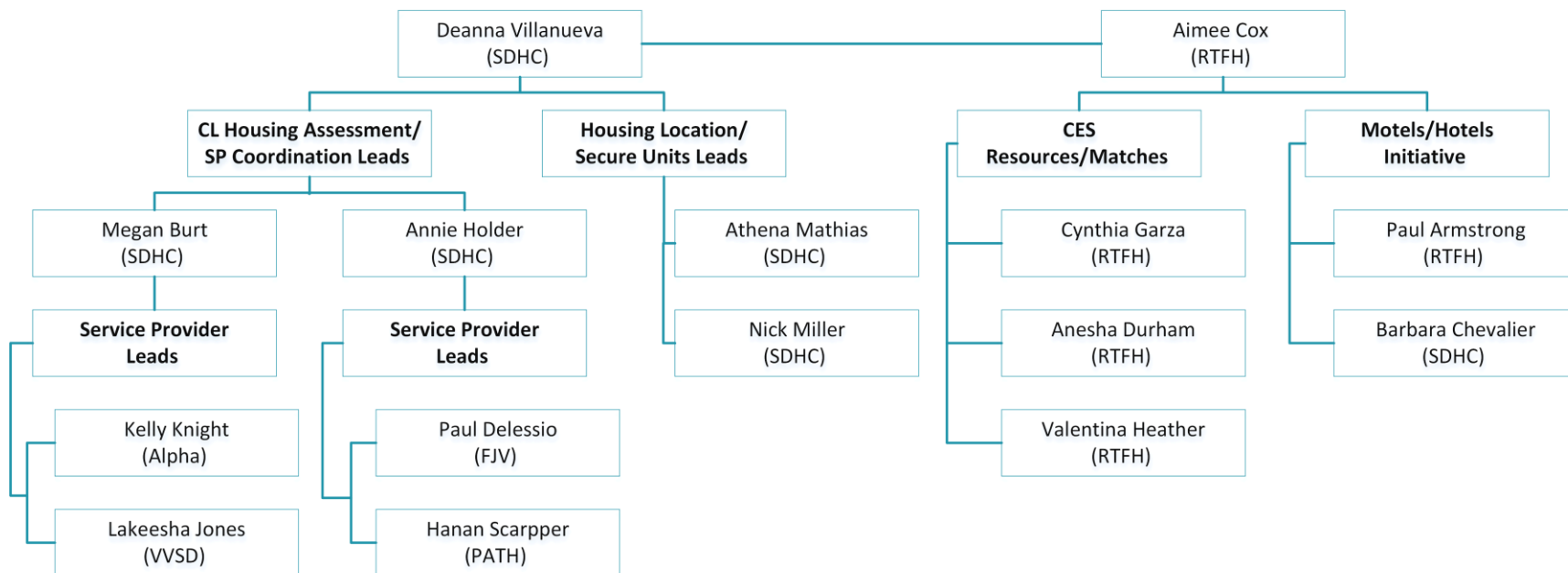
Exit Strategy Resource Unit



Objective

Dedicated to tracking and acquiring anticipated state and federal funding that can support new initiatives and scale up current successful programs.

Housing Navigation Unit

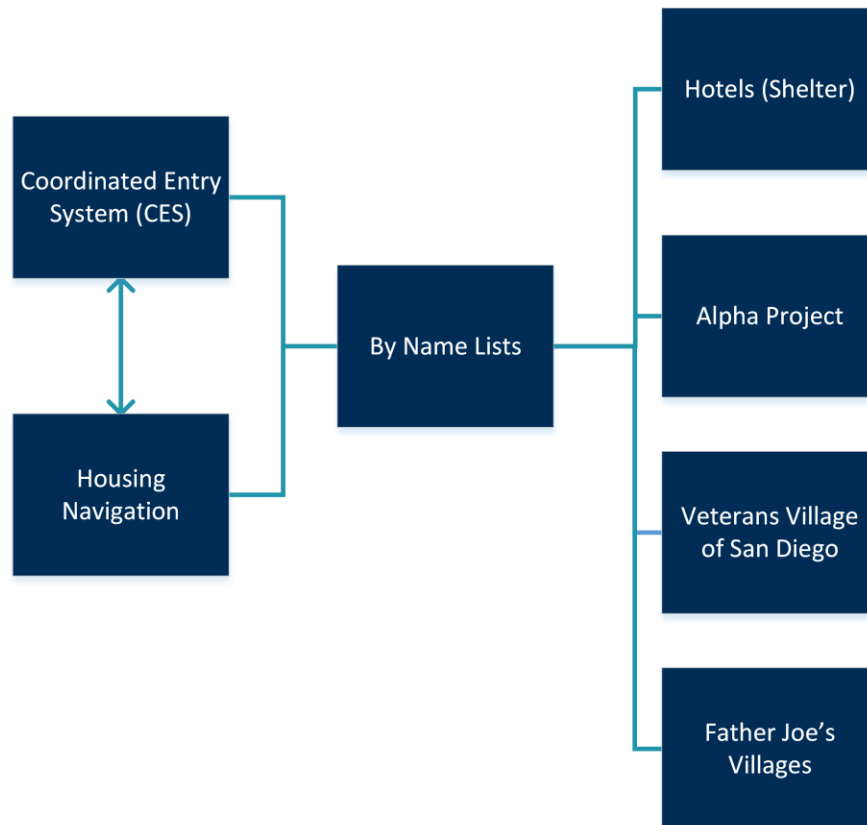


Objective

Responsible for connecting shelter residents to housing interventions and securing available units in the region.

Operational Process and Exit Sources

Housing Navigation Unit Operational Process



Interventions



Policy



Agenda Continued

3. Hotel Acquisition

4. Looking Ahead

5. Representative Updates

-Memo to RTFH from John Brady

6. Any Other Business

7. Next Meeting Date

Review of Action Items

Background Slides

Five Key Strategies



Implement a
systems-level
approach



Create a
client-centered
homeless
assistance
system



Decrease
inflow into
homelessness
by increasing
prevention and
diversion



Improve the
performance
of the
existing system



Increase the
production
of/access
to permanent
solutions



Goals Within Reach

(3 years)

1

Decrease unsheltered homelessness by 50%

2

Finish the job of ending Veteran homelessness

3

Prevent and end youth homelessness



TO: RTFH Board of Directors

FROM: John Brady

DAT: 4/15/20

RE: Encampments, Vehicle Habitation and Enforcement During Covid-19

First allow me to congratulate everyone on the herculean effort that has gone into opening the convention center. It is impressive how quickly and compassionately everyone acted to implement this solution to our current crisis. Special thanks to Supervisor Fletcher, Mayor Faulconer, Councilmember Chris Ward, Tamara Kohler, Lisa Jones, Keely Halsey, Alpha Project, Father Joes, VVSD, SDPD and their staff members. After taking a tour of the facility I am confident that we are operating a safe shelter environment for everyone from clients to support staff, and it will only get better as the days pass and testing is completed.

Currently I spending a majority of my time in downtown San Diego and am getting daily reports from our unsheltered about the conditions on our street. Because of the COVID-19 closures people are having a hard time accessing food, clothing, toiletries, bathrooms and charging their devices.

At the same time the city is struggling with the never ending balance between enforcement and the need to allow people to shelter in place. This article by Lisa Halverstadt is a clear indication that we are putting City of San Diego law enforcement in an untenable position with our current policies which force the police to execute and endless game of move – clean – move – repeat.

After speaking with board members who are in contact with Assistant Police Chief Paul Connelly we have learned that homeless complaints on the get it done app are up 30% from 950 to over 1,400. I am sure that this is, among other things, due to movements toward more urban areas where resources are still available and increased visibility with the general population sheltering at home. I would also assume that the enforcement vs. encampment conflict exists in municipalities countywide.

As we know we will never be able to shelter everyone at the convention center for a multitude of reasons from psychological and medical to legal issues. At tomorrow's board meeting I would like to take some time to hear solutions we could recommend to municipalities countywide especially given that the latest CDC guidelines are in direct conflict with current practices in relation to vehicle habitation and sheltering in place on the street. The Voice of San Diego article by Lisa Halverstadt is hyperlinked below.

<https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/news/morning-report-police-still-ticketing-the-homeless/>