

3-5-2014

Homeless Issues in Downtown Salt Lake City: Situation Assessment

Michele Straube

S.J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah, michele.straube@law.utah.edu

Jason Steiert

S.J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah

Follow this and additional works at: <http://dc.law.utah.edu/edr>

 Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Straube, Michele and Steiert, Jason, "Homeless Issues in Downtown Salt Lake City: Situation Assessment" (2014). *Environmental Dispute Resolution Program*. 8.
<http://dc.law.utah.edu/edr/8>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Wallace Stegner Center for Land, Resources, and the Environment at Utah Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Environmental Dispute Resolution Program by an authorized administrator of Utah Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact valeri.craigle@law.utah.edu.



Wallace Stegner Center
for Land, Resources and the Environment
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH S.J. QUINNEY COLLEGE OF LAW

Situation Assessment

Homeless Issues in Downtown Salt Lake City

January 2014

Conducted for Salt Lake City Mayor's Office
and Community & Economic Development

Report Authors: Michele Straube, Jason Steiert

Researchers/Editors: Haley Carmer, Jamie Pleune, Jason Steiert

Interviewers: Michele Straube
Haley Carmer, Melissa Reynolds, Jason Steiert, Shane Stroud

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>
Michele Straube, Director – michele.straube@law.utah.edu

Environmental Clinic

<http://www.law.utah.edu/clinic/clinic-list/the-environmental-clinic/>
Jamie Pleune, Director – jamie.pleune@law.utah.edu

Table of Contents

I.	Executive Summary	4
II.	Situation Assessment Process	11
	A. Research, Data, and Information Gathering	11
	B. Stakeholder Interviews	11
	C. Analysis	13
III.	Current Situation and Major Issues of Concern	14
	A. Introduction	14
	B. Livability & Quality of Life Downtown	15
	1. Mass of People	15
	2. Camping	20
	3. Cleanliness	23
	4. Crime and Drugs	26
	5. Panhandling	33
	C. The Face of the Homeless Population	35
	D. Daytime Facilities for Homeless Individuals	37
	E. Connecting Homeless with Services and Coordinating Services	39
	F. Housing First	44
	G. Opportunities for Transformative Redevelopment	48
IV.	Conceptual Framework	51
V.	Opportunities for the Future	53
	A. Introduction	53
	B. Services for the Homeless	55
	1. Strategic Planning	56
	2. Expanding Services	61
	3. Outreach / Coordination of Services	63
	4. Charitable Groups / Volunteers	64
	C. Redevelopment	65

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>

Situation Assessment – Homeless Issues in Downtown SLC

January 2014 – Page 2 of 78

D. Quality of Life Downtown	66
1. Enforcement / Deterrence	67
2. Specific Activities to Enhance Quality of Life Downtown	70
3. Neighborhood / Community Building	71
E. Strategic Support for Others' Efforts	72
F. Public Education / Awareness Raising	74

Appendices

- A. List of Interviewees
- B. Interview Questions
- C. Comparison Cities (Calgary, Houston and Phoenix)
- D. Summary of SLC Homeless Resources
- E. SLC Homelessness Workshop (2009) – Comment Summary
- F. Pioneer Park Public Workshop Final Report, February 2009
- G. SLC Police Department Data

I. Executive Summary

To effectively address homelessness and related issues affecting downtown Salt Lake City, the Mayor's Office determined that a comprehensive understanding of the situation was essential. The Wallace Stegner Center Environmental Dispute Resolution Program was brought in to conduct a Situation Assessment exploring public perceptions and existing efforts, and identifying opportunities for collaboration and increased coordination with particular focus on the City's role. This Assessment Report reflects a snapshot in time about an extremely dynamic situation.

The Assessment Team conducted 60 interviews across stakeholder categories: residents, businesses, all levels of government, law enforcement, homeless service providers, homeless individuals and other knowledgeable community members. The Team took stock of existing homeless-related resources in the Salt Lake community and researched the approaches taken by three other cities facing similar issues (Calgary, Houston and Phoenix). The Team also reviewed empirical data from existing reports, as well as documents offered by interviewees. Members of the Team supplemented interview perceptions through visits to the downtown areas most affected by homelessness and related issues.

Current Situation and Major Issues of Concern

After compiling the information gathered from this plethora of sources, the Team distilled the major issues of concern into six overarching topics:

Livability and quality of downtown life: The livability and quality of downtown life affects downtown residents and businesses, downtown visitors, individuals and developers aspiring to locate downtown, service providers' ability to reach the homeless population effectively, and the homeless population itself. The perceptions that livability and quality of downtown life is being negatively affected are based on these conditions:

Mass of people. Virtually all of the individuals we interviewed expressed some level of concern regarding the massive amount of people who congregate downtown, particularly in the four-block area bounded by 500 West, 200 South, 300 West and 400 South. Individuals' concerns across stakeholder categories involved personal safety and aesthetics, while businesses described an impact on profitability.

Camping. Residents living immediately next to Pioneer Park expressed aesthetic concerns regarding camping in their neighborhood. Other interviewees stated that homeless camps are dispersed throughout the city and nearby canyons and can present health and safety concerns.

Cleanliness. A majority of interviewees expressed concern about cleanliness related to the homeless population's activities downtown. Generally, cleanliness refers to trash, litter, and urine/feces. The primary areas of downtown that experience problems with cleanliness are from 200S to 500S and 300W to 600W, although some interviewees also noted cleanliness issues in and around the Gateway Mall.

Crime and drugs. Virtually all interviewees expressed concern regarding crime and drug use, primarily in the same geographic area affected by cleanliness issues, with many individuals having personally witnessed drug deals on a daily basis. There were differing opinions, however, about the relationship between crime and the homeless population, with many interviewees suggesting that drug dealers prey on the homeless population and use the mass of people as a cover for illegal activity. Many interviewees observed that police presence makes an aesthetic difference, causing drug dealers to move their activity to avoid arrest.

Panhandling. Interviewees identified panhandling as a significant issue in downtown Salt Lake, but also indicated that the practice of panhandling is expanding rapidly throughout the Salt Lake valley. Perceptions of the nature of the panhandling community vary, but many interviewees suggested that a large percentage of panhandlers are not actually homeless, but rather running a profitable business pretending to be homeless. Many interviewees believed that panhandlers' success in downtown and elsewhere is directly attributable to the generous nature of the Utah community.

The face of the homeless population: Many interviewees suggested that the face of the homeless population has changed over the past few years, making the strategic plans developed ten years ago to "end chronic homelessness" no longer comprehensive. Annual data collected to count the homeless population supports this conclusion. In addition to the chronic homeless (a large percentage of whom have now been successfully housed), Salt Lake City's homeless population includes the following sub-populations, with each group benefitting from a unique suite of services: families with children, women with children (often victims of domestic violence), youth, veterans, and individuals who resist transcending homelessness (referred to by some as "homeless-by-choice").

Daytime facilities for homeless individuals: Interviewees from various stakeholder groups consistently agreed that there are an inadequate number of places or facilities for homeless people to go during the day, and that essential services for the activities of daily living are inadequate. Needed daytime facilities and services include bathrooms, laundry, safe storage for their life's belongings, mail receipt, and an indoor area to "hang out".

Connecting the homeless with services and coordination of services: Formerly homeless individuals confirmed the opinion of many other interviewees that personalized one-on-one outreach to homeless individuals providing information about the specific services that individual needs (e.g., housing, mental health treatment, a hot meal) is the most effective approach. Generally, interviewees agreed that there are a number of outreach efforts to connect homeless individuals with needed services, but that the various entities providing outreach can collaborate more effectively to track homeless individuals and coordinate services.

Housing first: Starting with the Ten-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, most efforts to deal with homelessness in Utah rely on the Housing First model. The premise of Housing First is that once homeless individuals have housing, they are more likely to seek and continue receiving services and can search for employment. The interview results support the effectiveness of the Housing First model, although the type of housing required for different homeless sub-populations may differ. In addition, interviewees stated that the homeless housing market could benefit from additional permanent housing, transitional housing, and housing located near services.

Opportunities for transformative redevelopment: The issue of redevelopment in the area of downtown SLC housing Pioneer Park, homeless service providers and related facilities was a hot topic among many interviewees, especially residents and businesses. Interviewees shared many dreams and creative ideas about what redevelopment could look like, but no consensus emerged. Similarly, there is no consensus about the appropriate role that homeless facilities might play in transformative redevelopment of the area. Despite the lack of a common vision, many interviewees suggested that the time is right to move forward with redevelopment plans.

Conceptual Framework

The interview results highlight the complexity of the issues, the multiplicity of players, and the great potential for duplication of effort, confusion, and overlooking or omitting stakeholders and solutions. The Assessment Team has found the following conceptual framework helpful to think about homelessness issues and needed facilities and services.

The non-uniform nature of the current homeless population must be taken into consideration. Each sub-population of homeless individuals has unique needs, although there is also great overlap in the services and facilities that can benefit each group.

Much of the strategic focus nationally and within Utah has been on *ending* homelessness, with initial successful efforts devoted to housing the chronic and veteran

homeless populations. The interview results suggest that housing alone will not be adequate to end homelessness for all sub-populations, and that providing housing and supportive services is itself an ongoing (possibly never-ending) solution. In addition, exclusive focus on providing housing can reduce the attention and funding provided to needed services and facilities for the indeterminate amount of time while homeless individuals are still homeless.

We suggest that to be successful in “ending homelessness”, efforts in Utah need to address four stages of homelessness:

- Preventing homelessness – broad strategies that could significantly reduce the numbers of individual falling into homelessness;
- Homelessness – daily life while an individual is experiencing homelessness;
- Transcending homelessness – taking steps to find housing, employment and other needed services; and
- Preventing recurrence of homelessness – providing supportive services as needed after housing has been secured to prevent individuals from going through multiple rounds of homelessness.

The facilities and services needed in each of the four stages may overlap, but analysis of the best strategies to end homelessness for all sub-populations should be done separately for each stage.

Opportunities for the Future

The Situation Assessment Report includes suggestions for increased collaboration and coordination on the various issues and concerns heard in the interviews. The Team does not intend to suggest specific solutions, but rather suggests ways of structuring the right conversation so that the necessary stakeholders can find effective solutions that everyone will be willing to implement. While some of the suggestions cannot be implemented without co-leadership across multiple levels of government, the report focuses primarily on ways in which Salt Lake City is uniquely positioned to add value and exercise leadership on issues related to homelessness in its downtown.

Services for the homeless: Many of the immediate issues of concern to the majority of interviewees (e.g., a mass of people, cleanliness, crime and drugs, panhandling) may not improve substantially until our community grapples with homelessness and redevelopment. The report discusses these two issues in their appropriate order – a community vision of how best to provide for our homeless population will inform the opportunities for and parameters of redevelopment in the affected area of downtown.

Strategic Planning. We suggest three ways in which the City can promote and support the needed strategic planning conversations to address homelessness:

- Co-convene an action-oriented two-day Homeless Solutions Retreat with Salt Lake County, State of Utah (Workforce Services) and the Salt Lake Chamber. Day 1 of the retreat would result in a snapshot of current and desired facilities and services for each homeless sub-population at each of the four stages of homelessness, to help inform the future development of a strategic vision and action plans. Day 2 would result in a set of principles that can guide future decisions about locating homeless facilities and services, as well as a prioritization of immediate needs to address livability and quality of life issues and development of relevant action plans.
- Continue to host the Mayor’s Committee on Homelessness.
- Provide active City representation in other ongoing conversations about homelessness, including at a minimum the state and county level homeless coordinating committees.

Outreach. Existing outreach efforts may benefit from increased coordination. Face-to-face outreach efforts could easily be expanded in number and reach if someone (possibly the City) identifies ongoing instances of contact with currently and potentially homeless individuals that provide an easy opportunity for outreach. Finally, printed outreach materials should be available in any and all locations where homeless individuals are likely to spend time.

Charitable groups and volunteers. There is an opportunity to coordinate the numerous charitable efforts to “help the homeless” and channel the enormous community goodwill to improve the overall impact and effectiveness of each individual effort. The coordination can be provided by the City or possibly by a particular charitable organization itself. Coordination as to time and place can ensure that the food and clothing drops are distributed geographically throughout the City or valley and throughout the week. Consideration should also be given to developing a list of specific actions that community volunteers and charitable organizations can take to help the homeless population beyond food and clothing drops.

Redevelopment. Past and current discussions about redevelopment in the area have gotten stuck on the question of whether and where to relocate existing homeless facilities and services. The principled outcomes from the Homeless Solutions Retreat can inform the community’s conversations about how to meet the vision for serving the homeless population in conjunction with redevelopment of the western side of downtown. Decisions about where and how best to provide needed services for the homeless population can be decided proactively with everyone’s best interests in mind.

Quality of life downtown. The report identifies several opportunities to address the immediate symptoms or consequences flowing from the current situation, while also creating a social infrastructure to reduce the likelihood of their reoccurrence.

Enforcement / deterrence. Strategic conversations that include a cross-section of relevant law enforcement personnel (police, prosecution, judiciary) can develop an enforcement approach that will have the greatest likelihood of successful convictions and deterrence value. This will likely involve a review of existing ordinances, statutes and available data, followed by an analysis of desired outcomes and strategies to accomplish those outcomes. Since the issues and players are somewhat different, the report suggests separate strategic conversations for panhandling, camping/loitering/trespassing, and drugs.

Specific activities to enhance quality of life downtown. The City should continue to be involved actively in efforts to address cleanliness concerns downtown and help to improve coordination of existing efforts.

Neighborhood / community building. City and community leaders can work with existing neighborhood groups (or build a new group if necessary) to encourage the perception and use of downtown areas as a neighborhood. Neighborhood-building activities will not be successful over the long-term, however, unless the responsibility for inventing ideas, facilitating their implementation and ensuring their continued availability is institutionalized within one viable neighborhood-based organization. Finally, the City can signal that neighborhood-building in the Pioneer Park / Rio Grande portions of downtown is a municipal priority by instituting proactive neighborhood-wide communication methods.

Strategic support for others' efforts. While the full weight of planning and taking action to address homelessness does not and cannot rest on Salt Lake City, the City must be a key player in all aspects of the effort to address homelessness. The City's perspective must be heard and considered in strategic planning at all geographic levels (county, state, regional). The City plays an important role by providing strategic funding for the valuable efforts undertaken by other stakeholders, and at times filling in gaps in essential services. The City can also lend its voice and political weight to lobby for changes in policy, regulation and statutes as needed to facilitate a comprehensive and effective approach to addressing homelessness and related issues.

Public education and awareness-raising. The totality of interviews reflected that many community members have no knowledge about homelessness and related issues beyond what they see in Pioneer Park and the Rio Grande area (and the visceral feeling of discomfort that follows). The report suggests several opportunities for the City to help provide accurate information that can help dispel rumors and raise awareness among community members.

Model how we as a community talk about the issues. City and community leaders can and should model how we as a community talk about homelessness and

related issues. If done well, all levels of City government (Mayor, police, city staff, City Council), as well as business and other community leaders, would communicate a consistent message. The topics where community opinion and individual decisions are easily influenced by the content and tone that community leaders model include the nature of our homeless population, the approach this community is taking to provide for the homeless population and to address related issues (crime, panhandling, etc.), and a vision for the future of this part of downtown.

Facilitate information-sharing about homelessness and related issues. The City can and does play a significant role in facilitating information-sharing between the various stakeholders working on and interested in homelessness and related issues.

Provide information that informs effective generosity. The interviews suggest that a wider range of information than currently available, provided to the broadest possible audience, may help generous individuals and organizations direct their financial and volunteer contributions in the most constructive way.

Conclusion

Homelessness and the societal issues that follow are not unique to a particular city, state, region, or nation. These issues transcend generations and political boundaries. Their causes are as numerous and nuanced as their solutions. It is unlikely that these issues will ever disappear, but Salt Lake City has the resources and wherewithal to make great strides towards eliminating, or at least reducing, homelessness in this community.

II. Situation Assessment Process

The overall purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive situation assessment of homelessness issues affecting downtown Salt Lake through an exploration of public perceptions, existing efforts, and opportunities for collaboration and increased coordination. To create this comprehensive picture, the Assessment Team¹ developed a complementary, three-part process consisting of: (I) research, data, and information gathering; (II) stakeholder interviews; and (III) analysis. This section discusses each component to articulate its function and contribution to the report.

The Situation Assessment Report reflects a snapshot in time about an extremely dynamic situation. The situation and efforts to address relevant issues changed during the two months of interviews, changed again during the month in which the report was drafted, and will continue to change as the report is presented to the City and community. Some of the Opportunities for the Future identified in the report may be in progress by the time the report is read, but suggestions for the City's role in these opportunities remain timely.

A. Research, Data, and Information Gathering

Throughout the project, the Team researched past and ongoing homeless efforts in Salt Lake City and researched the homelessness issues and related programs in Phoenix, AZ, Calgary, Canada, and Houston, TX. In addition, the Team acquired data from the Salt Lake City Corporation and Salt Lake City Police Department. Last, the Team received information from various sources such as homeless provider brochures, city and county homelessness reports and agendas, and a variety of stakeholder-provided information. All of the research, data, and information received provides useful context for the stakeholder interview responses. A summary of information learned about the three comparison cities can be found in Appendix C. A summary of relevant Salt Lake City information can be found in Appendices D (Summary of SLC Homeless Resources), E (SLC 2009 Homelessness Workshop), and F (Pioneer Park 2009 Public Workshop Final Report). Data received from Salt Lake City Police Department can be found in Appendix G.

B. Stakeholder Interviews

At the core of this assessment are the 60 interviews conducted across stakeholder categories:

- Residents (owners and tenants of the neighborhood's apartment and condominium complexes),

¹ The Assessment team consisted of Michele Straube (Director of the Environmental Dispute Resolution Program), Jamie Pleune (Director of the Environmental Clinic) and four law students. Melissa Reynolds, Jason Steiert, and Shane Stroud earned Environmental Clinic credit; Haley Carner earned credit toward [Environmental Dispute Resolution Program](http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/)

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>

Situation Assessment – Homeless Issues in Downtown SLC

- Businesses (Downtown Alliance, Chamber of Commerce, large and small business owners, developers),
- Government (city, county, and state officials),
- Law enforcement (police, fire, attorney, judiciary)
- Homeless service providers,
- Homeless individuals (currently and formerly homeless), and
- Community members who are involved with homeless issues either through their work or volunteer activities.

The Assessment Team worked with Salt Lake City Corporation to identify specific individuals within each stakeholder category to interview.² Salt Lake City Mayor Ralph Becker and Community & Economic Development Director Eric Shaw jointly sent letters via snail mail inviting individuals to participate in the assessment and explaining its purpose and scope. The Assessment Team followed up with an email invitation attaching the list of interview questions and scheduled interviews. Virtually all individuals invited to participate in the assessment agreed to be interviewed. The list of interviewees can be found in Appendix A. The interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

Interviews generally followed the list of interview questions to ensure consistency throughout the interview process, although we spent more or less time on individual interview questions depending on interviewee experience and interest. Receiving the questions in advance allowed interviewees to prepare, so that most interviews could be completed in one hour or less. Each interview began with a brief description of the situation assessment process and an assurance of confidentiality – the information provided by interviewees would be used in the report, but there would be no attribution to specific individuals. We also encouraged individuals to let us know if there were particular statements or information we should keep confidential. As a result, throughout this report we refer to comments from interviewees by stakeholder category only (and at times even more generally).

The sheer number of stakeholders who conversed, informed, shared problems, and offered solutions concerning the homeless situation reveals an important aspect of homelessness in Salt Lake: the community cares about individuals who are homeless as well as the programs that serve them. As described in Section III of this report, the fervor and perspective with which stakeholders displayed concern about homelessness varied. Some stakeholders were optimistic and sympathetic while others were accusatory or apprehensive. Whether positive or negative, all interviewees displayed passion for homelessness and related issues.

² Some of the “individual” interviews were comprised of groups of people. We heard from close to 100 individuals over the course of the 60 interviews.

C. Analysis

Given the massive amount of information the Assessment Team accumulated over the short course of the project, the team devised multiple ways to synthesize what it was hearing and learning. Interview notes were transcribed by topic (rather than verbatim) as an initial organizational tactic, and identified by stakeholder category (rather than by interviewee) to maintain anonymity. The Team maintained an unbiased view towards all gathered information but as the quantity of interview notes grew, a logical categorization began to emerge. The Team met weekly to share impressions and revise the possible organization of interview results as needed. Section III of the report reflects what we heard from interviewees and was the Team's primary focus until interviews were completed.

The Team was careful not to draw conclusions during the interview process and to remain open to hearing all perspectives. After taking a short break at the end of the December to allow for synthesis of the interview results, the Team turned its attention to developing the conceptual framework for thinking about homelessness issues (Section IV) and identifying the opportunities for collaboration and expanded coordination (Section V). Given the dynamic nature of this issue, Team members have continued to gather additional relevant information through casual conversations and participation in the most recent point-in-time count,³ much of which has been incorporated into the report at the last minute.

³ The point-in-time count took place Jan. 30-Feb. 1, 2014. The data gathered during these three days will prove extremely helpful for pursuing several of the opportunities identified in Section V of the report.

III. Current Situation and Major Issues of Concern

A. Introduction

This section summarizes stakeholder perceptions and relevant information the Assessment Team collected through stakeholder interviews. Rather than provide detailed summaries of each interview, the Team has synthesized the 60 interview notes by stakeholder category, highlighting common perceptions and differences in perspective, and also providing a snapshot of current thinking on potential solutions to the issues. We give a few select factual examples or “stories” to illustrate each main point.⁴ The narrative refers to research, data, and other information to supplement stakeholder perceptions as appropriate. The summary of what we heard during 60 interviews is organized into six general topics:

- Livability and Quality of Downtown Life;
- The Face of the Homeless Population;
- Daytime Facilities for Homeless Individuals;
- Connecting Homeless with Services and Coordinating Services;
- Housing First; and
- Opportunities for Transformative Redevelopment.

The Team further divided the information learned about each topic according to the following sub-categories:

1. The current situation: level of consensus among stakeholders regarding the situation, its impact on their daily lives, possible cause and effect, and proposed solutions;
2. Recent changes to the situation, if any;
3. Past, present or future actions or projects to improve the situation, and perceptions of their success;
4. Existing or potential roles of stakeholders; and
5. Major challenges unique to solving a given topic.

Taken together, the interview sessions addressed all of these topics and each sub-category. However, few interviewees touched on all the subjects summarized in Section III. Therefore, this Assessment may not include substantive comments for every topic’s sub-categories.

The Team’s decision to compartmentalize information learned through interviews into particular topics serves a variety of purposes. First, the breakdown reveals collective stakeholder concerns and priorities. Second, there is no proverbial “silver bullet” to

⁴ We recognize that many important statements made by individual interviewees were not captured, but believe that the major themes raised in the interviews have been included.

solve the complexity of homelessness and related issues. Third, the breakdown provides a framework for future collaborative efforts and discussions. We hope that this breakdown allows stakeholders to identify uniquely tailored solutions for each topic. It should be noted, however, that a number of these issues are interrelated, which provides special opportunities for collaboration, the basis for the discussion in Section V.

B. Livability & Quality of Life Downtown

The livability and quality of downtown life affects downtown residents and businesses, downtown visitors, individuals and developers aspiring to locate downtown, service providers' ability to reach the homeless population effectively, and the homeless population itself. The major areas of concern that interviewees identified under this topic are the mass of people that congregate downtown near various services used by the homeless, camping, cleanliness, crime and drugs, and panhandling. Some interviewees also cited shelter capacity to frame their perception of livability.

1. Mass of people

Virtually all of the individuals we interviewed expressed some level of concern regarding the massive amount of people who congregate downtown, particularly in the four-block area bounded by 500 West, 200 South, 300 West and 400 South.

Current situation / level of consensus about situation: Interviewees generally expressed that the mass of people who congregate near service providers and in Pioneer Park is undesirable. Virtually all interviewees described the quantity of people who congregate near service providers as massive.

- Residents' observations that the 200 block of Rio Grande Street is often impassible because of the large congregation of individuals on the sidewalk was confirmed during the Assessment Team's kick-off field trip and subsequent visits to the area. Similar numbers of individuals taking up much of the sidewalk space can be observed on the north block of 500 West between 300 and 400 South.
- Businesses and residents who work and live immediately adjacent to Pioneer Park reported that there were large numbers of people "hanging out" over the past summer, with particular concentration on the 400 West side of the park.

Impact of current situation on interviewees: Interviewees who discussed the impact of the mass of people most often noted a concern for safety. Businesses also noted an impact on profitability, which they believed related to the mass of people and associated behaviors.

- **Provider perceptions:**
 - Wiegand Center area has become more dangerous for older people. For example, if younger people find out an elder receives social security, they will befriend the elder and cajole/steal their money or even literally take their belongings and ID. Many people have to sleep while somehow protecting their belongings with their body.
- **Resident perceptions:**
 - Many residents feel unsafe and have been threatened directly by the homeless that congregate near their buildings.
 - Some residents feel uneasy or unsafe walking through or near the crowd of homeless on their way to the new Winter Farmer's Market. Some residents drive two blocks between their residence and the market, or walk all the way around so that they do not have to walk by the crowd of homeless.
 - Many residents stated that they do not go to Pioneer Park to use the running track or playground facilities on Sundays or other times when food and clothing drop-offs are taking place.
- **Business perceptions:**
 - Some businesses have been forced to close because of the impact of homeless folks in area. At least one business will not renew its lease at the end of the term, considering reluctantly to abandon this downtown area.
 - At least one developer has been unable to get funding to develop a new venture in the Pioneer Park area (described as "shovel ready") because investors are leary about the impact the homeless population has on the livability and desirability of downtown life. Other developers are reluctant to move forward with future plans while the current situation remains.
 - Several local businesses showed the Team net profit numbers that have steadily decreased over the past 2-3 years. One business stated that this downtown location has the poorest profit margin of any of its locations in the Salt Lake valley.
 - People get off TRAX to visit and shop downtown, see the mass of people and get right back on the train.
- **Homeless individuals perceptions:**
 - Homeless individuals currently staying at the shelter stated that they were often uncomfortable walking through the mass of people directly outside the door. Reasons ranged from being approached by drug sellers (which is particularly difficult if the interviewee was fighting addiction) to their children being approached for a variety of illegal activities.

Recent changes, if any, with particular focus on how these changes impact interviewees' lives: Many interviewees think there has been an increase in the quantity, as well as a change to the makeup, of the mass of people over the past year. Perceptions seemed to differ depending on which locations in downtown Salt Lake City the person frequented – individuals who lived or worked near Pioneer Park or the area immediately south of Gateway were much more likely to believe that the mass of people congregated on a daily basis in those areas had increased in the past year.

- **Resident perceptions:**
 - There has been an increase in people and trash over the last six months to one year
- **Business perceptions:**
 - The number of people “hanging out” in Pioneer Park increased significantly during the past summer (2013).
- **Miscellaneous Community perceptions:**
 - Near the Viaduct area, not much has changed over the last year or so. There was a major change and strong enforcement from police around the Olympics but that enforcement has subsided over the last 12 years.
- **City perceptions:**
 - The main library has seen some increase in the number of homeless visitors, but the increase has not been as dramatic since shelters have increased their daytime hours.
 - The Sprague Branch of the library (Sugarhouse) has seen a large increase of homeless visitors recently.

Opinions/perceptions about cause and effect: Interviewees attribute the massive congregation of people to a wide variety of factors. There does not appear to be a clear consensus about what causes the large mass of people or the perceived increase in numbers over the past year, but the various opinions about cause are not mutually inconsistent. Some of the factors perceived to be contributing to the large population in public places downtown include the economic downturn, other cities sending their homeless individuals to Salt Lake, presence of drugs, location of services, inadequate shelter facilities, and the lack of homeless daytime facilities.

- **City perceptions:**
 - Not much has changed and the situation has not deteriorated in the last year, but fluctuations in the economy over the past few years have had some impact. What we are experiencing now is another “flare up.”
 - The library is a draw for homeless individuals because it is a neutral, truly public place. It is also close to the Public Safety Building, which gives a sense of safety. The presence of Volunteers for America (VOA) volunteers at the library also brings people in because the volunteers provide a variety of services to the homeless population.

- **Resident and business perceptions:**
 - There are cities around the United States that send their homeless to SLC because people perceive SLC services to be widely available and of good quality. However, this problem may have happened over the last six months to one year or perhaps this has never changed.
 - The mass of people fluctuates with the seasons. During winter months, people congregate outside of the shelters because they are hoping to get into the shelter to escape the cold.
 - Some people who may or may not be homeless congregate near the shelter to buy drugs. Drug use around the shelter leads to many of the problems with cleanliness from these users or addicts.
 - Zoning laws limit where providers can locate or re-locate.
 - The Twilight Concert Series has exacerbated the problem because the Twilight set-up forces the homeless population out of the park and into the surrounding business/residential areas.
 - The shelter does not have enough beds to serve the homeless population.⁵
- **Provider perceptions:**
 - People hang around shelters for various reasons, including spice and other drugs or for meals.
 - Nursing homes bring old people to the shelters when they run out of money or are difficult to handle.
 - There is a cyclical nature to the mass of people relating to health problems. One example given was a homeless individual with a health condition who is sent to the hospital. Upon stabilization, the hospital sends the individual back to a shelter. After a few days at the shelter, the individual goes back on the street, their condition exacerbates, and they go back to the hospital. The same cycle of homelessness, health issues and lack of shelter repeats.
 - Large groups of individuals loitering outside is an unintended consequence of the co-location of services and facilities. This is amplified by the lack of activities or facilities for the homeless to use during the day.
 - Anecdotally, one provider mentioned that bishops in Provo have admitted to providing transportation money to as many as 300 individuals to send them to the shelters in Salt Lake.
- **Homeless individuals perceptions:**
 - Inability or unwillingness to comply with the shelter's rules (e.g., regarding intoxication or use of drugs, curfew) force people on the streets. This is particularly true for families, where the inability of one family member to stay at the shelter results in the entire family staying together on the streets instead of having only some members of the family sheltered.

⁵ This perception is contradicted by numbers provided by both The Road Home shelter and the State of Utah, both of whom state that the number of available shelter beds exceeds the need.

Proposed solutions: Many interviewees suggested that increased housing opportunities would help to alleviate the massive congregation of people. These suggestions are covered in more detail below in the Housing First topic section. However, other interviewees suggested that redesigned shelters and other facilities to accommodate daytime use would help alleviate the problem.

- Redesign the service-providing facilities to accommodate daytime sheltering for homeless and alleviate the large congregation of people each day.
- Provide homeless with “day-passes” to stay in the shelters and reduce the size of the massive congregation.
- Perhaps create a homeless campus with a park to internalize activities so that homeless people are not waiting for services on sidewalks.
- Grow the shelters vertically. This way, the shelters do not need to spread out or move.
- Provide UTA passes to homeless individuals so they can leave downtown during the day.
- De-centralize service providers.

Past, current or future projects: A specific project’s anticipated success in reducing the number of people congregating in public spaces will necessarily depend on which perceived cause is being addressed. A few projects were identified as having focused on the issue of “body count” in particular:

- The Wiegand Center has regularly expanded the daytime services it provides, but the capacity limitations of its physical space cannot accommodate even a significant percentage of the numbers of individuals who congregate in public spaces downtown.
- In the fall of 2012, the Downtown Alliance convened a Safety and Security Summit. This summit invited anyone interested (including property owners, police, businesses, City) to address many aspects of homelessness including loitering and the constant “mess of people,” its associated negative look and feel, and the perception that it is not safe or welcoming.
- A multi-stakeholder Pioneer Park Partners Team met from 2008-2010 to identify ways to make Pioneer Park a welcome place for all legal activities. As a result, large draw events (like the farmers market and Twilight concert series) and daily uses of the park increased. The group’s report prioritizing additional possible actions can be found in Appendix F.

Major challenges unique to solving the mass of people issue:

- The diverse perceived causes for the mass of people constitutes a major challenge to solving the problem. There is no clear answer.

- Perceptions about who comprises the mass of people present major challenges to solving the problem. One interviewee described it this way: “Many people have the perception that homeless people are lawless drug users. Most of the time they are too poor to buy hard drugs and can only drink booze. Many homeless people are just down on their luck and need help.” Depending on which perceptions turn out to be true, there will be an inherent challenge to reducing the size of the mass of people if the solutions are limited to drug enforcement instead of providing help to those “down on their luck.”

2. Camping

Other than residents living immediately next to Pioneer Park, few of the individuals we interviewed expressed concern regarding camping near downtown. Usually, interviewees mentioned camping in conjunction with other sub-topics including cleanliness, panhandling, crime and drugs, and shelter capacity. Generally, interviewees expressed that homeless camps are dispersed throughout the city and nearby canyons.

Current situation / level of consensus about situation: The camping issue did not come up regularly during the interviews, but those who did raise it expressed concern for the health, safety, and livability of downtown and other areas where encampments exist.

- **Law Enforcement perceptions:**
 - People make “camps” in landscaped areas (parks, sidewalk and median strips, areas next to buildings).
- **Provider perceptions:**
 - Plenty of homeless live in camps (in Salt Lake Valley, in Tooele, everywhere) and only come into town when they need services or food.
- **Government perceptions:**
 - Homeless individuals have traditionally established camps around the library and in Library Square and this has not changed.
 - Salt Lake Valley Health Department spends considerable resources cleaning up camps in the downtown area and all over the valley.⁶ The conditions they find in many camps are unsanitary and may pose a health risk for the campers and others.
- **Resident perceptions:**
 - Campers leave Pioneer Park at closing time (dusk), but return to rebuild their camps after the police have conducted their sweep. Residents living adjacent to the park can hear the campers setting up camp and conducting activities of daily living, including loud arguments.

⁶ The Assessment Team was provided with a map showing the locations of over 100 camps cleaned up by SLVHD in a one-year period (2011-2012). Camps were identified in all but one of the seven Salt Lake City Council districts. See also, “Transients camping in City Creek Canyon to be evicted,” Salt Lake Tribune, June 24, 2013.

- Couches and other furniture groupings have been found in public spaces, indicating to the residents that individuals are regularly using the area as living space.

Impact of current situation on interviewees: Among those who addressed the camping issue, interviewees were concerned with the negative aesthetics of encampments. In addition, interviewees described the camps as a possible shield to conduct illegal activities.

- **Misc. Community perceptions:**
 - Homeless encampments at the Main Library, Washington Square, and in private garages impact livability in the downtown area.
- **Law Enforcement perceptions:**
 - Homeless camps provide the opportunity for out-of-sight activities: sleep during day, sell sex, camp overnight, sell and use drugs.
- **Resident perceptions:**
 - There is a problem with people sleeping in the parks. Whether or not it is illegal, it changes the atmosphere of the park. This in turn affects the comfort level for others to use the park.
- **City perceptions:**
 - Disturbances from campers near the library are not, as a rule, destructive or problematic, but there have been issues. Specifically, last summer one of the campers broke a sprinkler head, which resulted in a flood that damaged one of the shops in the library.

Recent changes, if any, with particular focus on how these changes impact interviewees' lives: Interviewees expressed concern that the homeless camps have dispersed into a much broader geographic area, and that children may be at risk.

- **Government perceptions:**
 - Over the last year, there were increased reports of homeless encampments along Jordan River Parkway, but also of encampments elsewhere in Salt Lake.
 - “Camping” has increased in City Creek Canyon. This creates an interface between residents, recreationists, and the homeless population, which citizens don’t like. It also increases fire danger (a fire was started last summer as a result of a small camp fire). City Creek Canyon is a protected watershed area, which may pose additional health concerns.
 - Camping has increased along the “crescent wall” in Library Square, especially during the summer. In fact, this past summer marked the most camps ever.

- **Business and residents perceptions:**
 - Last month or two, grade school and younger kids were hanging out in the streets and camping out on side strips late at night, while their parents “party.”

Opinions/perceptions about cause and effect: Interviewees generally agreed that the causes of camping are due to one of two factors: (1) there is not enough shelter space or (2) homeless people do not want to use the shelter facilities and prefer to be outside.

Proposed solutions: The proposed solutions to address camping varied among interviewees. Many interviewees suggested reworking the Salt Lake City camping ordinance to address the issue.

- **Resident solutions:**
 - Allow homeless to camp in Pioneer Park if they obtain a permit to do so.
 - Create a designated campsite or campground (either in the city or in the nearby public lands) where the transient population can legally camp.
- **City solutions:**
 - Properly train and educate officers regarding camping ordinances. For example, to sustain a case for violating the camping ordinance, officers need to submit highly-detailed, fact-specific reports about the situation. Officers should be well versed on how to draft these reports to allow city attorneys to obtain convictions for ordinance violations.

Past, current or future projects: Interviewees identified a number of camping-related projects. However, as discussed later, solutions suggested under other topics may help reduce the demand for camping (e.g., if individuals have a place to stay at a shelter or in housing).

- County posted “No Camping” signs, which allowed police to move people out.
- Re-landscaping median on 500W will help to remove hiding places and make it more difficult to “camp”; there is disagreement, however, on which landscaping would be most effective (sod v. rocks which make it uncomfortable to settle down).

Major challenges unique to solving the camping issue: The most often cited challenge to solving the camping issue was crafting a camping ordinance that complies with the Eighth Amendment⁷ and is clear for law enforcement to follow.

⁷ The Eighth Amendment states: “Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishment inflicted.” Generally, anti-camping ordinances are challenged for violating substantive due process because they criminalize innocent conduct, are void for vagueness, and do not give sufficient notice to prohibited conduct or sufficient guidelines for law enforcement.

- **City perceptions:**
 - Anti-camping ordinances are usually challenged under the Eighth Amendment. When considering the constitutionality of such ordinances, courts consider how many beds are available in the community and other reasonable alternatives to camping.
 - What is the test for “camping”?⁸ This remains unclear to City and police staff, yet is necessary to determine how to enforce the camping ordinance.
- **Resident perceptions:**
 - “Camping” enforcement is problematic because the law basically requires a tent and stove to be considered camping.
- **Law Enforcement perceptions:**
 - Camping citations can have multiple results in Homeless Court: a fine, community service (although this is not regularly enforced) or an arrest warrant (if the defendant does not appear). Most often, the same individuals get cited over and over (often multiple times in one day).
 - Camping citations can offer an opportunity for a police officer to connect a homeless individual with needed services.

3. Cleanliness

A majority of interviewees expressed concern about cleanliness related to the homeless population’s activities downtown. Generally, cleanliness refers to trash, litter, and urine/feces. The primary areas of downtown that experience problems with cleanliness are from 200S to 500S and 300W to 600W. In addition, interviewees noted cleanliness issues in and around the Gateway Mall.

Current situation / level of consensus about situation: Cleanliness was a common complaint from interviewees who spend time downtown. Interviewees described traditional trash and litter problems, intermixed with drug paraphernalia.

- **Law Enforcement perceptions:**
 - People toss drug paraphernalia from the sidewalk on 500W through the fence into the shelter’s playground.
 - People hide between parked cars and the sidewalk on Rio Grande Street to urinate or defecate.
- **Resident and business perceptions:**
 - Lots of homeless people defecate in and around garages, parking lots, businesses, residences, and adjacent landscaping. Residents have at

⁸ Salt Lake City Ordinance 15.08.080: States: “No person shall camp, lodge, or pitch a tent, fly, lean-to, tarpaulin or any other type of camping equipment in any park or playground except in cases of local emergency as declared by the Mayor of the City.” and “It is unlawful for any person, unauthorized or authorized, to fail to remove any camping equipment from any City park or playground for more than five minutes after being requested to do so by any City official or police officer.”

times had to clean this up themselves when it remains on the premises for multiple days.

- Garbage cans fill up almost as soon as they are emptied.
- Homeless people will start fires in trashcans to stay warm.
- Businesses that do not have locked bathrooms have observed homeless individuals sponge-bathing themselves there.
- **Homeless individuals perceptions:**
 - Families need to be careful about letting their children play in the shelter playground unsupervised, as there is drug paraphernalia (e.g., used needles) everywhere.

Impact of current situation on interviewees: Generally, interviewees expressed concern that the ubiquity of cleanliness issues makes the downtown area less desirable to live in or visit.

- **Resident perceptions**
 - Maintenance people for buildings around the Gateway/Pioneer Park area do not want to clean up the trash, litter, or feces.
 - Cleanup is expensive for private residents and businesses.

Recent changes, if any, with particular focus on how these changes impact interviewees' lives: Interviewees complained about the perceived increases in cleanliness problems over the past year, but also acknowledged that there have been recent efforts to address the problem. Interviewees did not believe that the recent cleanup efforts have fully eliminated the problem.

- **Resident and business perceptions:**
 - There has been a major increase in people and trash over the last six months to one year.
 - There has been a dramatic increase in trash over the last year or so.
 - This further reduces the desirability of the area for living, visiting, or establishing a business.
- **Law Enforcement perceptions:**
 - Big D landscaping was an attractive nuisance during the summer of 2013 (one person defecated regularly at their back door). Big D installed cameras at the back door and the problem went away. Big D apparently has people sleeping regularly on their ground.

Opinions/perceptions about cause and effect: Most interviewees suggested that homeless people cause the cleanliness issues. However, one interviewee suggested that the cleanliness issues are compounded during the summer because of the Twilight concert series. Generally, interviewees have sympathy for the homeless because cleanliness issues are rooted in the absence of bathrooms and trashcans in the area.

- **Resident perceptions:**
 - There is a lot of litter caused by events in the park – especially the Twilight concert series.
 - Food “drops” for the homeless often leave a lot of trash behind.
 - Trashcans are often full so the homeless and others have nowhere to put the trash; instead they just leave it on the street.
- **Misc. Community perceptions:**
 - Many people defecate wherever they can find a bush because there are few daytime bathroom facilities available to homeless individuals (many shelters are closed during the day, local businesses do not allow public use of their bathrooms).

Proposed solutions: Interviewees suggested a variety of approaches to solving the cleanliness issues. Most often, interviewees suggested that there should be more trashcans and public restrooms available for the homeless.

- **Resident perceptions:**
 - Make sure that events that take place in Pioneer Park make an effort to clean up the litter caused by their event-goers.
- **Provider perceptions:**
 - Current port-a-potties are good enough and not as expensive as the Portland Loo.⁹
 - Staffed restrooms open to the public and available for use to the homeless would provide a deterrent to inappropriate behavior.

Past, current or future projects: The most often-cited recent and ongoing projects were the Clean Team and the City’s recent installation of porta-potties. There is disagreement about the effectiveness of both efforts.

- The Downtown Alliance has contracted with Valley Services to clean up streets/garbage using a “Clean Team.” The Clean Team placed more dumpsters and hired homeless individuals who clean up 3x/day and respond to requests.
 - The City’s litter patrol program is ineffective because the homeless hired to help clean up litter are apathetic.
 - The homeless who pick up trash for the city with orange vests (Clean Team) are helping the situation.
 - The Clean Team program works well and gives homeless an opportunity to get temporary job training.
 - The City’s garbage pick-up has not increased to match the frequency of Clean Team crews.

⁹ From the Portland Environmental Services Division, a Portland Loo is a “simple, sturdy, attractive flush toilet kiosks located on sidewalks in public areas. The loos are free to the public and accessible around the clock every day of the year. Portland Loos give the community clean, safe and environmentally-friendly restroom facilities.” SLC is considering purchasing Portland Loos for placement downtown.

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>

Situation Assessment – Homeless Issues in Downtown SLC

- Salt Lake City Council recently allocated \$350,000 of funding for two public restrooms in the Downtown area.
- Until the permanent restroom facilities are installed in early spring 2014, temporary porta-potty facilities have been located in different areas of concern.
 - The porta-potties have made a big difference.
 - The porta-potties encourage people to “hang out” in surrounding public spaces, making the mass of people situation worse.
 - The porta-potties are used by individuals for illegal activities (drug use, prostitution).

Existing or potential role of stakeholders: Interviewees suggested that both the City and homeless service providers have responsibility to provide adequate trashcans and bathrooms.

- Road Home could provide access to restrooms, either indoors or outside.
- City should clean out trashcans near where the homeless congregate more often.
- Library Square has restrooms that can be accessed from outside, but they are always locked except during special events.

Major challenges unique to solving the cleanliness issue:

- **Garbage cans.** The major challenges to providing more garbage cans are financial and logistical:
 - Trash needs to be emptied as soon as the units get full, otherwise they overflow.
 - The Salt Lake City Central Business District maintenance district boundaries end at 400 W.
 - One interviewee believed that the Clean Team was not authorized to empty trash cans, and could simply clean up trash and litter from the streets.
- **Bathrooms.** Beyond cost, the concern over public restroom facilities is the possibility that they may serve as a private place where illegal activity can occur.
 - Bathrooms are a problem because they should be provided so that the homeless have a place to go to the bathroom, but bathrooms can also present crime problems because they are used for drug deals.
 - Several interviewees were unclear whether anyone has the responsibility to clean up feces found on the ground.

4. Crime and Drugs

Virtually all interviewees expressed concern regarding crime and drug use, but there were differing opinions about the relationship between crime and the homeless population. The primary areas of downtown that experience crime and drug problems

extend from 200S to 500S and 300W to 600W. In addition, interviewees noted that drug deals occur around the perimeter of the Gateway Mall and the Energy Solutions Arena. Interviewees noted, however, that drug dealers move their activity to avoid enforcement.

Most interviewees focused their conversation on the problem of drugs, as opposed to other crimes. While drug use and dealing may be the most visible crime to residents, businesses and visitors in the area, SLC Police Department data suggests that many other crimes are occurring as well.¹⁰

Current situation / level of consensus about situation: Almost all interviewees who discussed crime and drugs mentioned that drug deals occur constantly in the areas described above. However, many interviewees acknowledged that the homeless are victims in the drug problem because they do not supply the money or drugs. Interviewees mentioned that any numbers of drugs are available downtown, including meth, cocaine, marijuana, and spice.

- **Provider perceptions:**
 - Area has become an open-air drug market, with the homeless population being taken advantage of. This is a law enforcement problem, not a “homeless” problem.
 - Pioneer Park has served as a “containment field” for years.
 - At least 70 inebriated men will be at St. Vincent DePaul every night. Anecdote: every night, at least one person wants to go to detox, but there is no space at detox facilities.
- **Homeless individuals perceptions:**
 - Spice and Meth are an epidemic on the sidewalks, and sometimes even offered to the children of homeless families.
- **Resident perceptions:**
 - Large number of people who are the “criminal element” (drug dealers, drunks, prostitution) are not homeless and do not seek services, but they do spend the entire day in the Rio Grande area and go home at night.
 - We see 10-20 drug deals per hour some days on 200 So (across from Spy Hop, in middle of street at TRAX stand).
 - At each visit to Pioneer Park, resident sees a drug deal or sex act.
- **City Perception:**
 - Because of the enclosed, private nature of the library, meth and prostitution are very common.

¹⁰ Appendix G contains a preliminary analysis of crime data provided by SLC Police Department, along with heatmaps showing location and concentrations of different types of crime in three areas of downtown: (1) the Pioneer Park/Rio Grande area, (2) the Main Street/Gallivan Plaza area, and (3) the area around the main library. Because there are many possible confounding factors in analyzing the crime data (as outlined in the appendix), we have included only high-level observations in the body of the report.

- **Law Enforcement perceptions:**
 - There is a “Felony tree” on 500W. It is a blind spot for police surveillance (tree foliage, fence behind, buildings around, buildings across street too far to see anything). Criminals “clear out street” and set up shop for drive-by deals.
 - The drug use problem is going up, anything from prescription drugs to heroin.
 - SLCPD crime data confirms that the highest incidence of crime in each category occurs between June and September annually.
- **Business perceptions:**
 - Drug dealers prey on homeless individuals.
 - Dealers can blend in with the homeless population, which creates an almost insulated environment for drug dealers.
 - Fights among homeless individuals near downtown businesses happen frequently.
 - Employees have had bikes and other personal items stolen.

Impact of current situation on interviewees: Interviewees were most concerned with safety for themselves and for the homeless.

- **Provider perceptions:**
 - The existence of an extensive drug culture around the shelters and other homeless facilities uses up a lot of the providers’ time. For example, drug users consume provider services (food, facilities) and create an unsafe atmosphere by threatening or attacking other guests or staff.¹¹
 - Individuals who are high on spice can be very aggressive, making them dangerous in group situations.
- **Homeless Individuals perceptions:**
 - Crime on the sidewalks surrounding the shelter makes homeless families afraid for their own safety, as well as the safety of their children.
 - Non-homeless are victimizing the homeless (mainly drug dealers preying on homeless around the shelter). This makes it difficult for recovering addicts to stay clean.
- **Resident and business perceptions:**
 - Spy Hop took out outdoor bike racks because they were attracting too many loiterers; they also put wrap inside their street-facing windows from floor-to-ceiling so their young students don’t see the activity outside.

¹¹ One Wiegand Center staff member was killed the night before the Assessment Team’s interview as the individual was leaving his Wiegand Center job; at the time of our interview, the assumption was that it was probably drug-related.

- Lack of or reduced criminal element in other parts of the City puts downtown businesses at a competitive disadvantage. It is particularly frustrating because downtown businesses have no control over this.
- Some downtown residents are afraid to walk outside at night due to the large number of drug dealers and the accompanying violence.
- **City perceptions:**
 - Perceived increase in prostitution and illegal drug activity on State Street.
 - Because of criminal acts that occur within the library, the library has to employ private security; conflicts between security officers and homeless individuals can cause its own set of problems, but have decreased recently.

Recent changes, if any, with particular focus on how these changes impact interviewees' lives: Interviewees generally agree that drug dealing and crime has remained relatively constant throughout the years. However, interviewees mentioned that over the last year they've notice a decrease in undercover drug operations, which they believe has led to increased illegal drug use and sales. Generally, interviewees expressed the concern that drug dealers and criminal activity move to avoid law enforcement – so although the overall drug and criminal activity may not increase, certain areas may experience increases or decreases depending on where the police target enforcement.

- **Provider perceptions:**
 - The issue with spice has grown up seemingly overnight.
- **Business perceptions:**
 - Over the last 6 - 8 months there has been an increase in more severe crimes. Not sure of the cause.
- **Law enforcement perceptions:**
 - SLCPD crime data reflect significant fluctuations over time in the number of arrests (e.g., the fewest incidents occurred in 2010, and there was a decrease in some crimes from 2012-2013); this does not necessarily correlate with interviewees' perceptions.¹²

Opinions/perceptions about cause and effect: Overwhelmingly, interviewees do not attribute the cause of the crime and drug problems to the homeless.

- Often, the homeless are blamed for the drug dealing but they aren't necessarily the problem; the homeless act as handlers for the drugs.
- The crowd of homeless people near services attracts dealers.

¹² The Assessment Team did not have information sufficient to reach definitive conclusions about the reason for these fluctuations and their correlation (or not) to enforcement strategies. A preliminary analysis is found in Appendix G. The Team believes that this type of evidence-based analysis would be useful and could inform the development of effective enforcement/deterrence strategies as described in Section III.B.4. of the report.

- Problem is created by trying to house individuals in a highly centralized shelter system, while cutting off treatment and providing no detox facilities.
- Dealers are attracted to the shelter area to service addicted individuals.
- “Street thugs use kids as slaves to run or hold drugs - the kids won’t come forward out of fear.” The kids used here are not the root cause of the problem.
- Drug dealers run their operations from the shelter / Rio Grande area; buyers from other areas (e.g., BMWs from Draper) drive by to make their purchases.

Proposed solutions: Interviewees proposed a variety of solutions to solve the drug and crime problems. Most interviewees agreed that the situation downtown is bigger than crime and that the approach to reducing crime must be strategic and multi-faceted. There was general agreement that the City cannot simply “arrest their way out of the problem.”

- **Resident solutions:**
 - Relocate The Road Home and other homeless services to a less developed area. Also a homeless campus type location would “isolate” the homeless from drug activity and crime.
 - More communication between ICE and local Police to better manage undocumented homeless individuals.
 - The city should dedicate or hire more police (or private businesses should hire private security guards) to patrol and target the corners where the dealers hang out.
 - Install more lighting and cameras (that are actually monitored) near the services and any place homeless people congregate.
 - The City should enact a stronger “no loitering” ordinance that the police can enforce.
- **Business solutions:**
 - Have a zero tolerance policy for drug use and distribution.
 - Move the homeless shelters so that there is less congregation and lower likelihood that the homeless become involved with the drug dealers.
 - More drug treatment facilities.
- **Law Enforcement solutions:**
 - To address drug activity, there should be a reporting of specific metrics like felony arrests, misdemeanor citations, and petty offenses. This way the city can compare the situation in the shelter/Rio Grande area with other geographic areas.
 - Have all players on board: Prosecution, defense counsel and judge all participating collaboratively. Now, SLC has only volunteer lawyers as defense counsel for the homeless.
 - Improve communication and coordination across all agencies implicated in the issue.
 - Model after the Santa Monica homeless court, which does not hand out community service hours. Instead, homeless defendants must enter

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>

Situation Assessment – Homeless Issues in Downtown SLC

rehab programs. If they don't complete the rehab programs, the homeless individuals and service providers are held accountable.

- Technology is becoming available to field test for drugs on-the-spot, which can help with enforcement.
- Provide law enforcement presence at certain provider locations (e.g. dinners at St. Vincent DePaul) for a deterrent effect.

Past, current or future projects: Increased enforcement or simply increased police presence were the most-cited successful approaches.

- **Residents' perceptions:**
 - Cameras at Pioneer Park stopped the mass congregation for two years, but now the illicit drug activities are back over the last year or so.
 - After the Mayor's press conference in late September 2013, there were two police on the beat all day. It was "like Disney – the criminal element cleared out."
 - Undercover drug sting operations successfully remove drug dealers.
- **Law Enforcement perceptions:**
 - Cameras in Pioneer Park and on Rio Grande area displaced illegal activities for a time; cameras are effective only to the extent that there is active monitoring and follow-up to what the cameras observe.
 - There used to be two drug squads with the city police that conducted undercover operations to bust drug dealers and customers. This was an effective method of combating drugs, but the drug teams were assigned away from the city and the drug problem got worse. Recently, one of the two undercover drug teams has returned to the city police department.
- **Miscellaneous Community perceptions:**
 - Judge Baxter's homeless court is effective at reducing the number of warrants, petty offenses and fines that homeless people have.

Existing or potential role of stakeholders: Most often, interviewees pointed to the reason the drug and crime problem continues unabated. However, some interviewees stressed the importance of stakeholder groups working together to solve the drug and crime problem.

- **Residents' potential role:**
 - Residents should call the police non-emergency line more often when they see illegal activities.
- **Government's potential role:**
 - The City should enact a stronger "no loitering" ordinance that the police can enforce.
 - DCFS/CPS should play a larger role when parents are involved with drugs.

- **Law Enforcement thoughts on roles:**
 - Police officers suggested that the prosecutor’s office does not file all the cases police bring to them.
 - Prosecutors and judiciary suggested that the police bring them cases with inadequate evidence.
 - Police officers suggested that the judiciary is too lax in its sentencing.
 - Jails and prisons have no room, resulting in many criminals being released in a short period of time.
- **Provider’s thoughts on roles:**
 - Currently, some providers do not call the police because they don’t believe they’ll get a compassionate response. They want to work “side-by-side” with the police department.

Major challenges unique to solving the crime and drugs issue: There appear to be an infinite number of challenges to reducing crime and drugs in the downtown area, starting with the inter-relatedness of many issues and ending with institutional challenges (such as the size of jails) that are outside of the City’s control.

- **Resident perceptions:**
 - There are numerous calls to the police and fire department, not necessarily because there is a problem but because the homeless want attention. This makes it challenging for the police and fire departments to determine which situation is an emergency and which is not.
 - Detox programs have very limited time frames, often releasing individuals after 14 days. This is inadequate to solve long time drug addiction.
- **Law Enforcement perceptions:**
 - The statutory definition of “spice” in state law does not describe the drug that is sold on the street.¹³ This makes the law ineffective.
 - Police cannot enforce “No Trespassing” signs on public property. The issue is especially relevant at the Rio Grande Depot building, where the depot building and parking lot are public property, but the Rio Grande Café is private property (within the public space).
 - Cameras are only as effective as their sightlines (e.g., some cameras cannot be “manipulated” (change focus/direction) without a warrant, some areas are blocked from camera view).
 - Arrests are only a short-term fix.
- **Miscellaneous Community perceptions:**
 - Often people lose their ID’s after an arrest, which means they can no longer receive needed services.
- **Business perceptions:**
 - Police have been trying, but certain individuals are right back on the street immediately after arrest.

¹³ Spice is defined under statute by chemical composition. Utah Code Ann. 58-37-4.2. The composition of spice sold by drug dealers apparently changes more frequently than the statutory definition.

- **City perceptions:**
 - Intense enforcement activity only disperses the criminal activity to other parts of town.

5. Panhandling

About half of the interviewees identified panhandling as a significant issue in downtown Salt Lake. Similar to the drug and crime problems, however, homeless individuals are not always the problem. The panhandling problem is centered on the area from 200S to 500S and 300W to 600W, although many panhandlers go wherever they can within the city to get the best panhandling spots.

Current situation / level of consensus about situation: All interviewees who mentioned panhandling as a problem noted that it takes place everywhere downtown and has extended much farther into the Salt Lake valley.

- **Resident perceptions:**
 - The Maverick and McDonalds near 500W have terrible panhandling problems.
 - There are “professional” panhandlers who are not homeless. We heard multiple anecdotes of panhandlers feeding the parking meter for “nice cars,” talking on high quality cell phones, and boasting about how much money they can make in a short amount of time.
- **Miscellaneous Community perceptions:**
 - There is a vocal minority of panhandlers who probably are not homeless. The homeless are scapegoats for the professional panhandling problem.
- **Government perceptions:**
 - Many panhandlers have established “regular corners”, e.g. 200 E and 400 S.
 - One panhandler near Temple Square has been in the same location for over 15 years.
- **Business perceptions:**
 - A lot of panhandlers probably are not actually homeless. They prey on the generosity of community members.
 - Panhandlers love LDS Conference weekend because visitors are very generous to individuals they perceive as homeless.

Impact of current situation on interviewees: Most often interviewees described feeling unsafe around panhandlers. Some interviewees also expressed concern for the safety of the panhandlers.

- **City perceptions:**
 - There have been reports of increased panhandling on traffic islands. There is a concern that this practice could become a risk to the safety of the panhandlers and donors.
- **Resident perceptions:**
 - It is easy for “white privileged males” to say “no” to panhandlers, but for women it is more difficult, particularly if the panhandler behaves in a threatening manner.
 - Downtown residents have been followed and verbally accosted by panhandlers; this behavior triggers varying levels of acceptance and anxiety.
- **Business perceptions:**
 - Panhandlers are scary; employees feel nervous about being attacked when they’re walking to lunch.
 - Panhandlers keep customers from entering a store, resulting in lost sales.
- **Miscellaneous Community perceptions:**
 - Panhandlers are exercising their right to free speech. That does not, however, give them permission to harass or assault people.

Recent changes, if any, with particular focus on how these changes impact interviewees’ lives: Interviewees commonly stated that the panhandling problem has been present for a long time, but some suggested that there has been an increase over the last two years.

Opinions/perceptions about cause and effect: Interviewees did not generally explore the reasons why people panhandle, but offered these possible explanations:

- The economy has created more needy individuals.
- It’s becoming “acceptable”- the more we see it, the more we accept it.
- A generous population that “feeds” the panhandlers.
- It’s become “easy and popular.”

Proposed solutions: Aside from bolstering ongoing campaigns like the HOST Program (collecting money from the red parking meters downtown), interviewees focused their comments on amending laws and producing materials or advertisements to discourage giving money to panhandlers.

- **Business solutions:**
 - The State should pass a statewide panhandling law. It will serve as a good educational remedy. This effort should be accompanied by advertising and paid media that encourage people to donate to providers directly.
 - Get the message out to residents (don’t give to panhandlers).

- **Law Enforcement solutions:**
 - Continue the increased bike patrol presence. The previous increase in bike patrol cops decreased the level of crime near Home Depot, where an increase in panhandlers appeared to correlate to increased crime.
- **City solutions:**
 - A City ordinance against panhandling might be a possible solution. However, a prior iteration of a possible panhandling ordinance was opposed over constitutional/civil rights concerns.

Past, current or future projects:

- The HOST program, a collaborative project with multiple stakeholders, currently consists of red parking meters that collect change to fund homeless service providers. An educational and marketing campaign is under development to encourage community members to give change to the red parking meters rather than directly to panhandlers.
- Valley Mental Health Foundation is considering creating a currency system for the homeless, which would allow donors to give panhandlers vouchers instead of money.

Existing or potential role of stakeholders: Many interviewees suggested that educational campaigns to encourage donations to shelters instead of directly to homeless individuals would require collaboration among all stakeholders.

Major challenges unique to solving the panhandling issue: Most often interviewees suggested that the major challenge to solving the panhandling problem is that “[t]here is a vocal minority of panhandlers who probably are not homeless. The homeless are scapegoats for the professional panhandling problem.” Community assumptions need to change to reflect the reality of panhandling.

C. The Face of the Homeless Population

This section presents the diversity of people within the homeless population. Interviewees generally agree that the plan to end chronic homelessness is a success story. However, interviewees also identified a number of sub-categories of the homeless population who would not qualify as chronic homeless, with each sub-category benefitting from a unique suite of services.

Service providers in particular highlighted specific services that are currently unavailable or inadequate for different sub-categories of the homeless population. We do not attempt to provide a complete list of the needed services based on the interviews, but recognize that there is an unmet demand for services designed to meet the needs of the full spectrum of the homeless population.

Current situation / level of consensus about situation: The plan to end chronic homelessness was mostly targeted at single men. However, many interviewees suggested that the face of the homeless population is different today than it was several years ago, and may continue to change. The annual point-in-time counts and associated reports¹⁴ provide the most accurate data to confirm the exact nature of Salt Lake City's homeless population, but some of the perceptions and observations shared by interviewees across stakeholder categories are illuminating:¹⁵

- The vast majority of homeless individuals are mentally disabled or have a substance abuse problem.
- There has been a shift in the nature of the homeless population. There are more families. There are also more inebriated individuals, as well as people with other substance abuse and mental health problems.
- Women with children who are homeless as a result of domestic violence have different issues than homeless families with children.
- A significant majority of homeless individuals are homeless for less than three months.
- There are new aspects to the homeless population. They now include drug traffickers, psychotic people, professional homeless (panhandlers), teens, and families (who may only be temporarily homeless).
- We have not yet seen the full extent of the veteran homeless population. Veterans coming home in the future may have greater PTSD issues than seen to date.
- Youth are becoming homeless at a greater rate as they age out of foster care or are kicked out of their homes due to behaviors their parents or guardians choose not to tolerate (e.g., “oppositional defiant”, LGBT, drug use).
- Individuals will continue to become homeless for the foreseeable future, meaning that there may never be an “end” to homelessness.
- There is a certain portion of the homeless population who will not use services, even when offered. While the individual reasons may differ, they will not enter a shelter nor seek medical help or needed treatment. These individuals (referred to by some as “homeless-by-choice”) are often the most costly (e.g., requiring frequent emergency room services) and present a huge challenge.

Major challenges unique to the changing face of homelessness:

- The changing face of homelessness directly impacts service providers' ability to provide tailored services. The assumption of a housing-first approach may or may not be correct for each homeless sub-population (e.g., youth may not be

¹⁴ See, e.g., “Utah Comprehensive Report on Homelessness 2013,” Department of Workforce Services. <http://jobs.utah.gov/housing/documents/homelessness2013.pdf>

¹⁵ We did not confirm percentages cited by interviewees, so have changed them into narrative form. These interview results are intended to convey perceptions within the community about homeless sub-populations that may or may be receiving needed care.

ready for the responsibility of housing) and may require a different strategy for different sub-populations (e.g., transitional housing for families as opposed to permanent housing for chronic homeless). In addition, each group requires a specialized set of support services.

- Funding for existing homeless strategies has decreased substantially since the economic downturn in 2008. HUD financing has slowed and the scope of fundable activities has diminished. Service providers suggested that some of the most needed services (e.g., supportive services to accompany housing) are currently the most difficult to fund.

D. Daytime Facilities for Homeless Individuals

While less than half of the interviewees mentioned the issue of daytime facilities for homeless individuals, those that did expressed concern that there are not enough places for homeless people to go during the day.

Current situation / level of consensus about situation: Interviewees from various stakeholder groups consistently agreed that there are an inadequate number of places or facilities for homeless people to go during the day, and that essential services for the activities of daily living are inadequate.

- **Business perceptions:**
 - Homeless individuals have nothing to do, nowhere to go, and nowhere to store their “stuff” during the day.
- **Resident perceptions:**
 - Daytime mobile food providers (those who provide lunch) operate on the outside of Pioneer Park, making it look like the park is full of homeless people. Food drops such as these draw a large group of individuals in the middle of the day.
 - Homeless individuals hang out in front of the shelter and other service providers waiting for the doors to open.
- **City perceptions:**
 - Existing facilities seem to be doing alright with providing enough beds for overnight stays, but there seems to have been a reduction in daytime services. When the homeless population has nowhere to go during the day, public outdoor spaces are their only option.
- **Service provider perceptions:**
 - Homeless individuals need daytime access to bathrooms, laundry, safe storage for their life’s belongings, mail, etc. Many of these services are provided at the Wiegand Center, but may not be adequate to serve the totality of the homeless population.

- Many homeless individuals are afraid to leave their belongings unattended, so choose a spot near a service provider's door (often the Road Home or St. Vincent DePaul) and settle in for the day.
- A social network has developed throughout the homeless community who occupy public sidewalks and other public spaces, making this their preferred location to spend time with friends.

Recent changes, if any, with particular focus on how these changes impact interviewees' lives: Interviewees did not identify any recent changes to daytime shelter facilities or capacity.

Proposed solutions: Interviewees provided very few proposed solutions to address the lack of daytime facilities for homeless individuals.

- **Resident solutions:**
 - Move daytime mobile food providers to the middle of Pioneer Park.
 - Provide sack lunches from Deseret Industries or a like provider to keep homeless individuals connected to the system of services.
 - Since the public library already hosts many daytime homeless visitors, locate service providers there as well.
- **Government solutions:**
 - Acquire vacant lots around existing service providers to provide space for the homeless to congregate and access services during the day.
 - Use existing Main Library spaces to provide services for the homeless.

Past, current or future projects: Most of the projects interviewees identified are related to providing food in the middle of the day. However some interviewees indicated there are organizations or groups looking to acquire additional space to accommodate homeless individuals during the day.

- **Food drops:**
 - The Salt Lake City Mission offers bagels and donuts on 500W on a daily basis as people line up waiting for the Road Home to open.
 - Food trucks that make burritos provide free food once a week to homeless individuals in Pioneer Park and near the homeless service providers.
- **Additional daytime space:**
 - K2 Church / Street Krew has space just west of Gateway (100S 600W) which they are planning to turn into a homeless day center.
 - If Wiegand Center could enlarge its existing space, they will be able to accommodate more homeless people during the daytime.

Major challenges unique to solving the daytime facilities issue: Interviewees identified that the primary challenges to expanding or establishing daytime facilities for homeless are funding and space.

- Many providers have experienced steadily decreasing federal funding and are struggling to provide their current level of service. Expansion is financially difficult.
- Space in existing facilities is already limited. Expansion might require new zoning.

E. Connecting Homeless with Services and Coordinating Services

Service provider interviewees emphasized the complexity of homelessness and acknowledged that there is no perfect solution for everyone. Each homeless person is an individual with specific needs. Therefore, many interviewees offered opinions regarding the need to connect homeless individuals with needed services or the benefit of coordinating services. First, homeless individuals need to learn about all of the available services, whether the information is available in hard copy at a service provider or other location or via mobile outreach teams. Needed services may run the gamut from a free snack to extensive drug-rehab or permanent housing. Second, providers stated that they coordinate their services to reduce duplicative services and track individuals through the system of care.

Current situation / level of consensus about situation: Generally, interviewees agree that there is a level of functionality for connecting homeless individuals with needed services, but that there is room for improvement. In addition, interviewees agree that homeless service providers and other stakeholders can collaborate more effectively to track homeless individuals and coordinate services.

- **Connecting Homeless with Services:**
 - There are multiple mobile outreach teams (including the HOST program initiated by the SLC Police Department, the MOST program initiated by the Fourth Street Clinic, the library outreach team initiated by Volunteers of America, and Wednesday mobile outreach initiated by a group of providers).
 - Each service provider organization has case workers or case managers who work one-on-one with homeless individuals, but the case loads are generally very large. Many organizations focus on one specific service (e.g., connecting individuals to housing), meaning that a homeless individual may be unaware of the large variety of services available to them from their contact with one case manager.
 - Formerly homeless individuals maintain that individual outreach which helps connect the individual to needed services is the most effective

approach (i.e., the approach which helped them transcend homelessness).

- **Coordination of services:**

- Service providers work closely together now, but could coordinate efforts even more.
- Current database systems do not make it easy for service providers to share information about homeless individuals. Coordination of services for an individual homeless person often occurs via word-of-mouth.
- Currently, everything falls on the shelter's shoulders.

Recent changes, if any, with particular focus on how these changes impact interviewees' lives:

- Some interviewees mentioned a degradation over the past few years in the quality of coordinating services between service providers.
- For the first time in Utah, the most recent point-in-time count (2014) included a series of questions that will be used by service providers to prioritize housing and provide personalized connections to needed services. While standardized point-in-time data will be entered into the national HMIS database managed by the state, data from the more detailed questionnaire will be managed by the service providers themselves.

Opinions/perceptions about cause and effect of recent changes: Interviewees identified that the recent reduced level of coordination services is due to decreased federal funding. Providers are challenged to provide fundamental services with the funding they have, leaving little or no time and funding to provide management functions such as connecting and coordinating.

- Outreach is an important goal, but not funded. The HUD "continuum of care" grant for Utah no longer includes supportive services (a result of a strategic choice to increase Utah's national competitiveness for HUD funding).

Proposed solutions: Interviewees provided a wide variety of solutions including the following:

- **Provider-suggested solutions:**

- Volunteer or paid case managers. Case management is very effective when done one-on-one and when the case manager follows through consistently with a homeless individual to ensure that the connection with needed services is truly made.
- Put an "outreach HQ" in the back part of the Fourth Street Clinic facilities (Alan B. Ainsworth Bldg, south of current clinic and parking lot). This space could house all of the behavioral outreach providers in one place

(Road Home, Fourth Street Clinic, VA, University Neuropsychiatric Institute, VOA), with a 24/7 police presence.

- **Business-suggested solutions:**
 - Provide targeted services to sub-populations (e.g., homeless youth).
 - VOA is currently developing a homeless youth resource center. This was achieved because the VOA had starting capital, as well as a good location allowed by zoning and local neighbors.
- **City-suggested solutions:**
 - Health care providers need to collaborate to find innovative ways to provide the quality and kind of services needed in the homeless community (e.g. “in the moment” treatment *and* chronic mental health needs).
 - Police should give everyone an ID that allows for consistent access across providers.
 - Build a medical detox facility. A physician from Intermountain HealthCare is willing to staff it for free.
 - Ensure that outreach individuals have all the information about available services and facilities.
 - City and other stakeholders should participate in a weekly “Winter Shelter Meeting” to discuss the scope of shelter housing needs during winter months, as well as transportation for homeless individuals to available shelter facilities.
 - Have social worker outreach teams go with the Fire Department on homeless individuals’ emergency calls.
 - Use the Coordinating Community Response Team (CCRT) as a model. (SLCPD received a grant to create a community-wide response team for elder vulnerable adult crime victims.)
- **State-suggested solutions:**
 - The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is now managed by the State. The system has a wealth of information but is not widely available nor has it been “mined” for information. The system’s data should be analyzed and be made available to providers or stakeholders.
- **Law Enforcement-suggested solutions:**
 - Create Homeless Outreach Teams (HOT) to go find and talk with homelessness about available services. The HOT members should help willing homeless through case management and a 12-step process to get off the street. Homeless who have gone through the 12 steps can in turn help other homeless individuals.
- **Resident-suggested solutions:**
 - Create a city-issued ID card so that homeless individuals can be connected with services more easily. A city-issued card could help connect people with employment or government benefits.
 - Bring in volunteers as homeless “ambassadors” to direct homeless people to services or inform them about available services.

Past, current or future projects: Interviewees identified a number of projects that are directed to bolstering provider coordination and connecting homeless individuals with needed services. These projects range from meetings for stakeholders to exchange information to activities intended to help connect homeless individuals to available services.

- Downtown Alliance subcommittee on safety issues met regularly over a year's period (2013). They created the Neighborhood Watch and Downtown Ambassador programs. The project has 30 ambassadors trained at Level 1 (orienting visitors to the City) and none yet trained at Level 2 (homeless outreach) or Level 3 (mobile watch).
- The Family Justice Center providers work together to provide services or connection to services 24/7.
- SLCPD HOST Program – Teams including a SLC police officer and service providers work to connect individual homeless with specific services (e.g., Fourth Street Clinic, City/County Housing Authority, VA housing, Valley Mental Health).
- Fourth Street Clinic build-out ready Jan 2014. Providing a variety of services to homeless individuals under one roof, including peer support rooms, open door for homeless youth, behavioral health and a dental clinic.
- MOST team – Teams of medical professionals work to connect individual homeless with specific services (e.g., Fourth Street Clinic, Volunteers for America).
- Library team – Teams including service providers and formerly homeless individuals (Fourth Street Clinic Consumer Advisory Board) go to the main library to identify homeless individuals and connect them to specific services.
- Wednesday mobile outreach, a tent set up in public locations like Pioneer Park staffed by representatives from providers including the VA, Fourth Street Clinic, Volunteers of America, Road Home.

Existing or potential role of stakeholders: Interviewees provided a variety of potential roles for stakeholders in the future to improve the coordination between service providers and connecting homeless to services.

- **City's role(s):**
 - A potential role for the City is to help provide roaming case workers to connect homeless individuals with services, similar to what VOA currently does but on a larger scale.
 - The City should convene stakeholders and facilitate a conversation about the issues and potential solutions. The City should NOT be in charge of developing and deciding on one solution or another, this is the community's role.
 - The City can help provide more mobile outreach caseworkers to target the homeless or ride along with the police/fire department on calls to serve the homeless.

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>

Situation Assessment – Homeless Issues in Downtown SLC

- **County role(s):**
 - SL County Coordinating Council needs to provide unbiased coordinating of planning efforts. The County currently has a rotating leadership group and part-time grant person.
- **State role(s):**
 - Encourage local jurisdictions to host needed homeless facilities. Homelessness is not just Salt Lake City's problem; it is a statewide problem.
 - The State should provide funding and other resources needed to address the issues.
- **Resident/Business role(s):**
 - Providers should go to the business community with a common interest of needs that is community-wide so that businesses know where the donations will go. Providers should include a way to demonstrate the outcomes from the funding.

Major challenges unique to solving the connection and coordination issue:

- **Miscellaneous community perceptions:**
 - Getting an ID is very hard because it requires 2 forms of proof. Without ID, homeless are very difficult to track and connect with services.
- **Law Enforcement perceptions:**
 - Estimate that 30-50% of the homeless are "gypsies" or "nomads." These people often have addiction problems, but don't try to fix them. In addition, these people may like being homeless and never desire to seek services. Any programs that try to connect these people with services will be ineffective.
 - SLCPD HOST program reports are not shared with any other service providers (although they contain info about housing, detox, etc.) because they are considered "police reports."
- **Provider perceptions:**
 - Different providers have different definitions/screening criteria for "homeless" (often depending on funding source). For example, the Fourth Street Clinic's definition of "homeless" includes anyone without a permanent address (includes those coming out of shelter, camping on street, doubling up or couch surfing, in transitional housing or detox), but the Road Home uses a more restrictive definition.
 - HUD no longer wants to fund services, so money for outreach has dried up.
 - Outreach teams need to be consistently available to build trust with the homeless population.
- **City perceptions:**
 - Identification cards are expensive to create.

- Utah State Prison vans drop off recently released prisoners near Pioneer Park without any ID.

F. Housing First

The vast majority of interviewees discussed the benefits of a Housing First model as an effective approach to the homeless problem. Interviewees generally agree that once homeless individuals have housing, they are more likely to seek and continue receiving services and can search for employment.

Current situation / level of consensus about situation: Generally, interviewees think that there are inadequate housing opportunities available to individuals who are homeless. Specifically, interviewees think the homeless housing market could benefit from additional permanent housing, transitional housing, and housing located near services.

- **Provider perceptions:**
 - 10,000 individuals are on the waiting list for Section 8 vouchers, yet there will be no awards for the next 18 months.
- **Resident perceptions:**
 - The housing first/transitional housing model is best suited to homeless individuals who want to be inside. Some homeless just want to remain outdoors and will never accept a housing first model.
 - We need housing that is appropriate for different types of homeless - VOA shelter for teens, shelters for mentally ill, etc.
- **Law Enforcement perceptions:**
 - Numerous facilities provide housing, but many are lax with their rules regarding drugs or alcohol. Housing First can only work if the providers are very strict with their policies.
- **Miscellaneous Community perceptions:**
 - Lack of housing is at the root of many problems. No ID? (probably because an individual has no current address or utility bill). No use of homeless services? (probably because the individual cannot be located to encourage their visiting services on a regular basis).
 - The Housing First model creates a non-threatening place to “hang your hat.” The supportive services provided with the Housing First model also help to create a holistic approach tailored to each individual’s issues. Once each homeless person is housed, then they may be stabilized with services.
- **City perceptions:**
 - There is a “desperate need for housing.” The following areas can be improved:
 - Transitional/temporary housing;

- Long-term housing that includes services to ensure stability/retention of residents;
 - Housing facilities that include mental health/addiction/case management services; and
 - Independent, long-term housing that “check-up” with stabilizing services.
- **Formerly Homeless perceptions:**
 - The most frustrating part about homelessness and trying to stay out of homelessness are two daily problems for some individuals: (1) “How will I get my next (drug) fix” and (2) “Where will I lay my head tonight.”

Recent changes, if any, with particular focus on how these changes impact interviewees’ lives: Generally, Interviewees agreed that the lack of housing makes it more difficult for homeless individuals to receive services or stay connected with services.

- There are fewer opportunities over the past six months for providers to develop housing units for the homeless.
- Rapid re-housing money provided in the stimulus package is severely reduced. One provider runs out of rapid re-housing funding in the first day of each month.
- Sequestration at the federal level has severely reduced available funding for rapid re-housing and supportive services.

Opinions/perceptions about cause and effect: Interviewees primarily attributed the lack of affordable or homeless housing to decreased federal funding and zoning issues. There are many potential locations for low-income housing but the local zoning does not allow for such construction.

Proposed solutions: Interviewees offered a variety of solutions including providing services at housing locations, connecting the privilege of housing to completing needed services (like drug treatment programs), and better coordination of housing placement through universal waitlists and strategic locations of housing (either close to services or public transportation to access services).

- All permanent/transient housing options need attached supportive services.
- An immediate cash infusion of \$1M for 25 case managers to help with master leasing / rental assistance and supportive services.
- Part of every developer’s portfolio should include a mandatory affordable housing component.
- Housing for the homeless should be located near transportation so that residents can get to their jobs or reach services.
- Housing First providers should be stricter with their rules regarding a tenant’s ability to stay in the housing provided. If there is a problem with drugs, the

resident should be required to complete substance abuse classes or mental health counseling or alcohol classes to stay in the housing.

- Homeless housing should create more of a community feel and opportunities for employment. For example, the bottom level of Sunrise Metro building has space that was to be used for cooking space (restaurant style), but this never happened. This would be great space for residents to get training as cooks / chefs. In addition this type of facility could leverage the cooking skills to serve meals and give back to community.
- Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds for emergency assistance should be used to keep people from becoming homeless in the first place.
- Develop one waiting list for chronic housing that everyone can utilize.

Past, current or future projects:

- YWCA in Midvale, a family refuge center, provides housing and all related services under one roof. Seems to be very successful and there is neighborhood buy-in.
- Palmer Court has been very successful because they have management and landlords that understand the tensions and problems associated with homelessness. The problems that Palmer Court faces are ones that a normal landlord probably could not handle.
- In the past, there was a big push under Bud Bailey to construct 136 units; only half are finished and only 20 are dedicated homeless housing units.
- The Rapid Re-housing Program was very helpful with stimulus funding because it could provide up to 6K dollars for 6 months at scattered housing sites. This program was effective because only about 13% of those who received this aid came back to the shelter.
- Sunrise Metro housing is great. If there were many more housing places like this one, the homeless situation would be improved. Sunrise is effective because the housing program views each resident as an individual with unique service needs.
- Palmer Court offers some mental health services along with housing options. Other facilities offer housing and services for individual/families affected by HIV.
- Currently, there is an RDA project between 200 S and N Temple, which will provide additional residential units.

Existing or potential role of stakeholders: Interviewees generally suggested that the government (city, county, and state) should all play a role in helping to solve the inadequacies of housing for the homeless. Many interviewees suggested that with decreased federal funding, perhaps business organizations, wealthy individuals, or religious institutions could play a role in funding housing alternatives for the homeless population.

- **Government role(s):**
 - Every level of government has responsibility to provide funding for permanently affordable supportive housing.
 - County or City or State can step into the role of homeless services/housing provider. No existing 501(c)3 NGO has the name recognition to coordinate services. Any funding that comes to this coordinating agency should include stipulations. For example, DWS funding requires that the recipient provide employment counseling.
- **County's role(s):**
 - The County should improve its housing services, both in providing transitional housing options and coordinating existing housing services on all levels. With respect to funding, the County will need to be more creative with its funding sources if/when federal funds dry up.
- **State's role(s):**
 - Needs to finance, produce, support low-income housing.
- **Business, wealthy individuals and religious institution role(s):**
 - Fund vouchers to help homeless individuals move into housing.

Major challenges unique to solving the Housing First issue: Interviewees most often cited the housing waiting lists, lack of funding, and a diversifying homeless population as major challenges.

- **Provider perceptions:**
 - Palmer Court has a 6-month to one year waiting list and many homeless people “disappear” during that time.
 - It is difficult when the agency providing subsidized housing does not own the building. It is a major challenge for housing providers to own their own apartment complexes.
- **Government perceptions:**
 - The next wave of veteran homeless population is still to come – Iraq and Afghanistan. Currently there is the VA housing at Freedom Landing, but this may not be large enough to house recent vets who are at risk of homelessness.
 - Single women with children and families are difficult to house because they need more space and unique services.
 - People are willing to build low-income housing, but not homeless housing.
- **Provider perceptions:**
 - Supportive case management and co-located services in housing are essential, but there is inadequate funding.

G. Opportunities for Transformative Redevelopment

The issue of redevelopment in the area of downtown SLC housing Pioneer Park, homeless service providers and related facilities was a hot topic among many interviewees, especially residents and businesses. Interviewees shared many dreams and creative ideas about what redevelopment could look like, but no consensus emerged. Similarly, there is no consensus about the appropriate role that homeless facilities might play in transformative redevelopment of the area. Despite the lack of a common vision, many interviewees suggested that the time is right to move forward with redevelopment plans.

Current situation / level of consensus about situation: Private property owners and tenants are looking forward to redevelopment of the downtown area, but have no current confidence that it will occur in the foreseeable future. Homeless service providers have financial investments in their current facilities to protect, which complicates any discussion about redevelopment of the downtown area.

- **Government perceptions:**
 - Question whether the style and nature of the current shelter is a model that services today's needs. Current shelters and other homeless facilities are 25-30-years old and were built when single men were the greatest need; now we're looking at families and substance abuse/mental health issues. Despite making changes to accommodate changing circumstances, the current shelter design requires all members of a single family to stay in one room for up to 30 days.
 - For the first time ever, the single male side of shelter is not full, and the family side is overflowing (i.e., the Midvale overflow shelter is only for families).
 - Redevelopment has been stalled due to the presence of homeless facilities downtown. Businesses want the homeless problem to "just go away," but moving the facilities will not solve the problem. This "solution" only resolves stakeholder discomfort but does nothing to address the underlying causes of the problem.
- **Provider perceptions:**
 - Co-location of services is useful to the homeless population. The issue is the number and concentration of population, due to other societal choices (lack of housing and supportive services).
 - Four local service providers own their own property: Catholic Diocese (St. Vincent DePaul and Wiegand Center), Salt Lake Rescue Mission, Fourth Street Clinic, and the Road Home.
 - The property-owning service providers have made significant investments in their facilities. Fourth Street Clinic recently completed a \$3M renovation and expansion.

- Moving the homeless facilities “out of sight” is disrespectful of this segment of our community and does not serve them well in the long-run. Development will keep moving to the current “edge of downtown”.
- **Resident perceptions:**
 - Zoning is a huge problem for location of homeless services because many zoning areas prohibit new homeless facilities.
 - Many residents moved to the downtown area on the assumption that it was an “up and coming area”; the delay in redevelopment is disappointing.
- **Business perceptions:**
 - At least two banks will not lend for new construction projects near Pioneer Park.
 - The redevelopment vision for the Pioneer Park / Rio Grande area developed under the previous administration has not been implemented; businesses question what the current vision is.
 - Business interviewees recognize that our community has a responsibility to provide services for the homeless population; many interviewees believed that resources can be found to do so.
 - There is notable interest from developers, businesses and residents to live and work in the Pioneer Park area; the lack of financial investment is the limiting factor.

Impact of current situation on interviewees:

- Providers (housing and services) cannot expand or build new facilities to help the homeless because of negative sentiment from neighbors (businesses and residents) and restrictive zoning.
- Businesses are losing confidence that the situation downtown will change in the foreseeable future and are making long-term decisions accordingly.
- Developers are reluctant to invest in new projects because they do not see any improvement in the situation downtown.
- Some resident interviewees are committed to staying downtown, but see a high turnover rate among renters.

Proposed solutions: Interviewees provided a wide variety of potential solutions, many of which are inconsistent with each other. In particular, interviewees were divided on whether the homeless services should be co-located and whether they should be located downtown or dispersed throughout the city. The large number of proposed solutions suggests, however, that interviewees across stakeholder groups have devoted much thought and emotional energy to this topic and are hoping for a prompt resolution.

- Relocate The Road Home and other homeless services to a less developed area.
- Co-locate all homeless services.

- Rethink the physical configuration of the shelter and other homeless services. Also, rethink the exact location of services downtown. A wholesale move of all service providers from downtown will not work.
- Governments (state, county, and local) should come together to address zoning issues as they relate to homeless service providers and housing.
- Repeat the “Salvation Army Model” used in conjunction with the Homewood Suites property. Under this model, property owner service providers are given financial incentives to change location that honor their equity interest. One option could be to identify a cost-free or low-cost new location where they can build a state-of-the-art facility and provide ongoing income from the redevelopment that will occur on their current property.
- Redesign the homeless service provider facilities so that there is less of an impact on the surrounding location.
- Move forward with the approved RDA Hub District redevelopment plans.¹⁶

Past, current or future projects:

- The Salvation Army was provided financial incentives to vacate its property without losing its ownership interest to make way for construction of the building currently housing Homewood Suites. The Salvation Army did not build the new facility as anticipated.
- Ten years ago, community leaders (including business, religious and other interests) put together a private plan to finance relocation of the shelter to a new improved facility. The plan could not be implemented due to City government and other community opposition.
- Some interviewees suggested that there may be renewed interest among community leaders and financial support to revisit the issue of providing improved facilities for homeless service providers as a part of redevelopment of the part of downtown.

Major challenges unique to addressing redevelopment issues:

- Private financing is currently difficult to find for new development projects in this area of downtown.
- Moving the homeless facilities will not prevent homeless individuals from congregating downtown.
- The Road Home shelter is a permitted use. Any other homeless facility location would be a conditional use.
- Neighborhoods resist locating homeless facilities in their midst. The overflow shelter had to be placed in Midvale due to NIMBY (not in my backyard) sentiments preventing the use of other donated space near downtown.

¹⁶ RDA shared plans dated January 2013 for the “Hub District” which encompassing the two-block area between 500W and 600W, 200S and 400S.

IV. Conceptual Framework

The previous section, summarizing what the Assessment Team heard through the interview process, highlights the complexity of the issues, the multiplicity of players, and the great potential for duplication of effort, confusion, and overlooking or omitting stakeholders and solutions. The Assessment Team has found the following conceptual framework helpful to think about homelessness issues and needed facilities and services.

As described in Section III.C, the nature of the current homeless population is not uniform. Each sub-population of homeless individuals has unique needs, although there is also great overlap in the services and facilities that can benefit each group. Our interview results suggest the following primary sub-populations:¹⁷

- Chronic homeless
- Families with children
- Women with children, victims of domestic violence
- Youth
- Veterans
- Homeless-by-choice (individuals who might fit into one of the other categories, but who do not aspire to transcend homelessness)

There are root causes or cross-cutting conditions which affect all the sub-populations, including mental illness and alcohol or drug addiction. In addition, individuals released from incarceration or treatment are at high risk for becoming homeless across the sub-population groups.

Much of the strategic focus nationally and within Utah has been on *ending* homelessness, with initial successful efforts devoted to housing the chronic and veteran homeless populations. The interview results suggest that housing alone will not be adequate to end homelessness for all sub-populations, and that providing housing and supportive services is itself an ongoing (possibly never-ending) solution.

We suggest that to be successful in “ending homelessness”, efforts in Utah need to address four stages of homelessness: preventing homelessness, homelessness, transcending homelessness, and preventing recurrence of homelessness. The facilities and services needed in each of the four stages may overlap, but analysis of the best strategies to end homelessness for all sub-populations should be done separately for each stage.

We describe each stage of homelessness briefly, but do not pretend to provide a complete analysis of current and future activities or needs for each stage.

¹⁷ Annual point-in-time information reaffirms this analysis and can provide data to quantify the relative size of each sub-population. See, e.g., Salt Lake County, *Homeless Prevention & Services*, available at: <http://www.slco.org/crd/housing/homelessness.html>.

Preventing Homelessness. There are many reasons why individuals become homeless, including the economic downturn since 2008, health issues, and unforeseen emergencies. While not every instance of homelessness can be prevented, many interviewees suggested broad strategies that could significantly reduce the numbers of individuals falling into homelessness. These included increasing the availability of affordable housing, expanding the availability and reducing the cost of mental health and detox facilities, and expanding job opportunity and skills training programs.

Homelessness. Daily life while an individual is experiencing homelessness is extremely challenging. Homeless individuals need safe nighttime shelter and a place to store personal belongings (sometimes all a person's worldly possessions) without risk of theft. They also simply need a place to "hang out" during the day and take care of the daily necessities of life (bodily functions, laundry, mail, etc.). If the homeless individual has small children to take care of and/or suffers from addiction, mental illness or health challenges, daily life while homeless may simply be overwhelming.

Transcending Homelessness. In addition to taking care of the necessities of daily life, homeless individuals need and want to take steps to find housing, employment and other needed services.¹⁸ Without active assistance from knowledgeable people (e.g., case managers or service providers), many homeless individuals are unaware of available resources or do not have the skills to take the steps needed to transcend homelessness.¹⁹

Preventing Recurrence of Homelessness. About half of the homeless individuals interviewed were in their second or third round of homelessness.²⁰ Reasons for the recurrence of homelessness vary, of course, but generally mirror the reasons for becoming homeless in the first place. The Housing First model, which seeks to provide permanent supportive services along with housing, recognizes the importance of preventing the recurrence of homelessness among at least the chronic homeless sub-population.

¹⁸ Homeless individuals interviewed stated that they need to find housing within thirty days or they may lose their bed at a local shelter, and that reduced funding for transitional housing forces them to find immediate employment to be able to pay for the housing.

¹⁹ Health and other conditions or a lack of skills are often the underlying reason why the individual became homeless.

²⁰ We were told, but have not confirmed, that these individuals count as both success stories (if they stay out of homelessness for longer than six months) and "new" homeless cases (when they re-enter homelessness), begging the question of whether current measures of success provide the correct incentives for service providers.

V. Opportunities for the Future

A. Introduction

Salt Lake City is not alone in facing issues related to homelessness. During the three months of the situation assessment, the team came across numerous newspaper articles related to other cities' challenges (national and global), many of which were similar to those found here.²¹ One of the authors traveled to two different locations during the interview period (Portland OR and Honolulu HI, unrelated to this project) and now considers both relevant "field trips" due to the visual presence of homeless individuals and panhandlers throughout the time spent in those cities. Part of the Assessment Team's assignment was to research the approach to homeless issues being taken in three other cities.²² Prior to this Assessment, Salt Lake City heard from four cities about the challenges they face addressing these issues in a 2009 Homeless Workshop.²³ More recently, Salt Lake City staff and other interested community members traveled to Los Angeles during the interview period to learn more about LA's approach. Feedback from both of these events has also informed this Assessment.

Homelessness has been a presence in this and other communities for decades. Absent a miraculous economic recovery and immediate provision of all needed services, we can anticipate that individuals will continue to move in and out of homelessness over the foreseeable future. Combining this reality with the understanding that the issues are very complex may put into question whether "ending homelessness by X date" is a fair framing of the long-term objective. There are difficult choices to be made at all levels of government. The best outcome may be to develop effective strategies as outlined below, and be consistent in implementing them for as long as homeless individuals continue to need services.

Soon after beginning the interviews, the assessment team came to the realization that the possible scope of discussion extends far beyond homelessness. There are many different perspectives on the current approach to homelessness, but there are also relevant concerns about quality of life downtown, as well as health and safety, that are not exclusively related to our community's approach to homelessness. We heard a variety of opinions on possible solutions, such as "we can't arrest our way out of the problem" and "moving the shelter will fix it all." A successful approach to the multiplicity of issues will have to be multi-faceted, including enforcement (arrests and deterrence), a review of which services are provided where, and myriad other actions.

²¹ For example: "A housing-first solution to chronic homelessness in Nashville," marketplace.org, Oct. 7, 2013; "Amsterdam has a deal for alcoholics: work paid in beer," New York Times, Dec. 4, 2013; "San Francisco: Nevada dumps homeless, mentally ill on streets," Salt Lake Tribune, Sept. 22, 2013; "Anchorage residents close to homeless issue split over Raspberry Court," Alaska Dispatch, Oct. 6, 2013.

²² Calgary, Houston and Phoenix were selected by City staff as the comparison cities. A summary of these cities' approaches to the issues of concern to SLC interviewees is found in Appendix C.

²³ Representatives came from Cleveland, Ohio, San Antonio, Texas, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Phoenix, Arizona. A summary of City staff's reflections on those presentations is found in Appendix E.

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>

Situation Assessment – Homeless Issues in Downtown SLC

The issues related to homelessness are not limited to downtown Salt Lake City, although the visual (and visceral) impact may be particularly evident there. Interviewees gave examples of panhandling occurring in Sugarhouse, Central City and areas further south in Salt Lake Valley. Homeless encampments are found all over the valley, including along the Jordan River and in City Creek. Conversations about potential solutions to some issues should not necessarily be limited to downtown Salt Lake City.

Many of the issues raised by the interviews can and need to be addressed at multiple levels – symptoms that are experienced on-the-ground in downtown (and sometimes elsewhere), as well as planning and resource issues that must be addressed at city, county (or the entire Salt Lake Valley), regional (Wasatch Front), state or national levels. For some issues, Salt Lake City can and should lead. For other issues or potential solutions, the City can support other entities' efforts by providing input and then offering financial, political and social support to promote successful implementation of the ultimate decision. The City will also want to be thoughtful about assigning long-term responsibility within its own institution to ensure that initiatives can be carried through in the long-term.

As is evident from a review of the concerns and experiences shared by the interviewees, the issues are inter-related and cannot be addressed in a vacuum. A solution that fixes one problem can have unintended consequences that exacerbate the situation. This inter-connectedness of issues suggests that the most effective solutions will come after discussion with a variety of stakeholders in order to anticipate potential side-effects, while also encouraging creative solutions and empowering many community members to assist with implementation as appropriate. It also suggests that there may be no simple, linear progression for finding effective solutions, but rather multiple approaches to be pursued simultaneously in coordination with each other.²⁴

Finally, the situation related to homelessness and quality of life issues in downtown SLC is dynamic and constantly changing. At the most basic level, the weather dictates how many homeless individuals are visible outdoors in public spaces, which could lead to the misimpression during cold months that the situation has improved. At a logistical level, there are many players with organizational responsibility or community interest who all intend to “do the right thing” to improve the situation. During the interview process, we continually heard of new initiatives being undertaken, some of them involving a common core of players and others bringing new energy into the mix. This dynamic approach creates a tension between acting quickly and coordinating across multiple efforts to maximize effectiveness for the intended beneficiary communities.

One thing that the Assessment Team heard consistently throughout our interviews is that there is a perception of crisis within the communities who spend time downtown –

²⁴ About halfway into the interview process, the Assessment Team started referring to this as the “octopus project”, as what we heard from interviewees revealed more and more intertwining tentacles.

residents, businesses, developers, visitors and homeless individuals. On the other hand, we also heard strong individual and community commitment to do what it takes to provide for all members of our community, including the homeless. Likewise, there is a history of success to build on – the great strides made toward ending chronic and veteran homelessness, the Clean Team and other City efforts to address cleanliness issues, the growing collaboration between service providers and others to reach out to the homeless on an individual basis, and many more. As one interviewee said – “We don’t want to waste a good crisis.”

Section V of the report, entitled “Opportunities for the Future,” outlines the Assessment Team’s suggestions for increased collaboration and coordination on the various issues and concerns heard in the interviews. We do not intend to suggest specific solutions, but rather suggest ways of structuring the right conversation so that the necessary stakeholders can find effective solutions that everyone will be willing to implement. While some of the suggestions cannot be implemented without co-leadership across multiple levels of government, this section focuses primarily on ways in which Salt Lake City is uniquely positioned to add value and exercise leadership on issues related to homelessness in its downtown.

B. Services for the Homeless

The interview results highlight that homelessness is not the only issue that needs to be addressed to improve the current situation in downtown SLC. Suggested approaches for dealing with some of the issues of greatest immediate concern to interviewees are outlined in the sections following this one. The immediate issues (a mass of people, camping, cleanliness, crime and drugs and panhandling) may not improve substantially, however, until our community grapples with the issues of homelessness and redevelopment. We discuss these two issues in their appropriate order – a community vision of how best to provide for our homeless population will inform the opportunities for and parameters of redevelopment in the affected area of downtown.

The state, county and city have a history of success with collaboratively developing and implementing a vision for the homeless population as it was understood ten years ago when the Ten-Year Plans to End Chronic Homelessness were developed. As a result of the Housing First model (construction of permanent housing with supportive services such as Palmer Court and Sunrise Metro), the numbers of chronic homeless individuals in Utah and Salt Lake City have been reduced significantly. A similar Housing First approach has resulted in the virtual end of veteran homelessness in Salt Lake City.

The face of homelessness has changed in the past 5-10 years, and may continue to change in the future as economic and other social or environmental factors play out. As described in previous sections, our community’s homeless population now includes a wide range of groups with many overlapping needs, but also uniquely different needs for specific sub-populations. In addition, financial resource constraints (especially at the federal level) have resulted in an ongoing situation where many homeless individuals cannot transcend homelessness as quickly as is ideal, yet little strategic attention has

been paid to the most effective infrastructure for making the time spent in homelessness most constructive and least destructive for the homeless individuals and their host community.

Our community has the opportunity and capability to build on the successful collaborative effort focused on the chronic and veteran homeless populations to co-create a vision of the future that provides for the needs of *all* categories of our homeless population during all four stages of homelessness. This section provides some suggestions on how to move forward to both create and implement such a vision. We paint a larger picture involving all levels of government, but focus primarily on the areas in which we believe the City can have the greatest impact.

1. Strategic Planning

Each homeless sub-population (e.g., families with children, women with children, youth, veterans, etc.) deserves a strategic planning effort to identify the ideal approach to help that population in each stage of homelessness (preventing homelessness, during homelessness, transcending homelessness, preventing reoccurrence of homelessness). Housing First strategies may be viable for most populations, but may look different for chronic homeless individuals than for families with children. Interviewees suggested that Housing First may not be a high priority for homeless youth. Supportive services (also referred to by some as “wraparound services”) were cited as an essential component of a successful Housing First model (for both permanent and transitional housing). The same supportive services (e.g., life skills training, employment counseling or mental health services) may be valuable across homeless sub-populations, suggesting a conversation about the relative benefits of offering these services in one central location or providing them at individual housing-first locations.

The totality of interviews suggests that individual service provider organizations are doing some level of strategic planning for the homeless sub-population they serve, but it does not appear that there is much current conversation across organizations or with government planning and funding entities to identify overlapping needs and potential economies of scale. If anything, it appears that individual organizations are concerned about receiving or keeping “their share” of an ever-decreasing funding pie.

Strategic planning conversations can create a community vision for addressing homelessness across multiple dimensions:

- Define what infrastructure and services are needed to assist
- Each homeless sub-population
- In each of the four stages of homelessness; and
- Identify current and future areas of duplication and gaps.

Once an ideal has been described, the conversation can move to identifying who currently does and in the future should implement the vision, with what funding, as well as periodic assessment of outcomes and revisiting of the strategy.

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>

Situation Assessment – Homeless Issues in Downtown SLC

January 2014 – Page 56 of 78

This 50,000-foot level of strategic planning has historically been undertaken by existing state and county Homeless Coordinating Committees, with demonstrated success for the chronic homeless sub-population. The City needs to have significant involvement in the strategic planning conversations, however, since many of the current homeless facilities and services are located within its jurisdiction, and unanticipated consequences of the current approach have fallen squarely on the City's shoulders to fix. We suggest three ways in which the City can promote and support the needed strategic planning conversations: co-convening a Homeless Solutions Retreat, continuing to host the Mayor's Committee on Homelessness, and providing City representation in other ongoing conversations about homelessness.

Homeless Solutions Retreat

The strategic planning effort described above can be kicked off with a two-day Homeless Solutions Retreat. Unlike many other meetings which are designed for information sharing, the Homeless Solutions Retreat should be highly interactive on the assumption that the key participants already have a significant level of knowledge and experience with the subject matter.

Recognizing that comprehensive strategic planning for all homeless sub-populations in all four stages of homelessness is much greater than a two-day exercise, the Homeless Solutions Retreat will help to outline next steps for the comprehensive strategic planning effort. The Solutions Retreat's primary outcomes will be a road map for developing a comprehensive strategic plan, a set of principles to guide future decisions about locating homeless facilities and services, and an action plan for high priority issues that have an immediate effect on livability and quality of life in downtown Salt Lake City.

Co-conveners: Comprehensive strategic planning on homeless issues will require multiple levels of conversation, with different entities potentially taking the post-Solutions Retreat lead. We suggest that the Homeless Solutions Retreat be co-convened by Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, State of Utah (Workforce Services) and the Salt Lake Chamber.

The State and County are logical leads for creating the big picture vision for all homeless sub-populations in the four stages of homelessness. Salt Lake City is held publicly accountable and has great responsibility for managing the real-life consequences resulting from homeless facilities and services, whether or not consistent with a strategic vision. The business community has a significant stake in decisions made relative to homeless facilities and services, and also represents a significant resource for developing creative solutions.

Having these four significant interests co-convene the Homeless Solutions Retreat should encourage full participation by all essential stakeholders, but also signals to participants and community members that providing for our homeless population is a significant community undertaking that can only be done collaboratively. As we discuss

in more detail in Section V.F., the choice of co-conveners also begins to model how we as a community talk about homelessness and related issues.

Participants: The Homeless Solutions Retreat we envision will be the beginning of a longer-term strategic planning effort, with future conversations being more focused on specific issues and likely including additional issue-specific stakeholders. We have therefore divided the potential Solutions Retreat participants into two categories: essential stakeholders who should be key participants in at least one day of the retreat, and important stakeholders who can be invited to the retreat but whose participation becomes essential in future issue-specific conversations.

Essential participants include those interests who have a big-picture perspective on homeless sub-populations and the four stages of homelessness and/or are an integral part of addressing high priority issues that have an immediate effect on livability and quality of life in downtown Salt Lake City. Based on our interviews, we believe the following are essential participants:

- Regional mayors (including at a minimum Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Ogden, Provo)²⁵
- State, county and city homeless specialists²⁶
- All homeless service providers (e.g., The Road Home, Volunteers of America, Fourth Street Clinic, Catholic Community Services, YWCA, Salt Lake Mission, Crossroads Urban Center)²⁷
- Behavioral health service providers²⁸
- Pamela Atkinson, community advocate for the homeless
- Salt Lake Valley Health Department
- SLC Departments with responsibility for or interest in addressing issues related to homelessness²⁹

Important stakeholders to invite, whose participation in the Solutions Retreat may be helpful, but whose input will be most valuable as the post-Retreat action plan is pursued, might include:

²⁵ Regional representation at the Solutions Retreat is essential since the homeless population is generated regionally, yet to date the primary responsibility for providing facilities and services has fallen to Salt Lake City.

²⁶ These include at a minimum Lloyd Pendleton, Gordon Walker, Kerry Steadman, Carleton Christensen, Elizabeth Buehler (SLC Homeless Services Coordinator) and Mike Harman (SLC School District Homeless Liaison).

²⁷ Including all homeless service providers, not only those who serve specific homeless sub-populations, will ensure that strategic planning is based on a complete and accurate picture of current activities and needs, but should also help to create the feeling and reality of common purpose and collective responsibility.

²⁸ The main behavioral health providers identified by interviewees include University Neuropsychiatric Institute, Valley Mental Health, and Odyssey House. Other entities were mentioned as potential providers of behavioral health services (e.g., IHC).

²⁹ These include, at a minimum, Community & Economic Development, Police Department, Fire Department, Library, and Public Services.

- Potential funders³⁰
- State, county and city agencies whose services may include or affect the homeless population³¹
- County and city housing authorities³²
- Current and formerly homeless individuals³³
- Charitable organizations³⁴
- Residents and businesses in the affected downtown area³⁵
- Salt Lake City Council members

There is an obvious tension between including in the Solutions Retreat all voices that have needed expertise or may have creative ideas, and creating a participant list that is too large for a constructive action-oriented conversation. Post-Retreat conversations with the “important stakeholders” about specific opportunities may be sufficient. In addition, consideration can be given to inviting some essential stakeholders to participate on only one day of the Solutions Retreat if their expertise is most relevant to the issues on the agenda for that day (or leave the choice up to them).

Suggested Approach to Issues: Day 1 of the Homeless Solutions Retreat can be viewed as a kick-off to the strategic planning effort that will encompass all homeless sub-populations in all four stages of homelessness. Day 2 will focus more closely on the aspects of homeless issues that currently create negative impacts in downtown SLC. This will provide an opportunity to develop guiding principles regarding the siting of necessary homeless facilities, and prioritize immediate or short-term actions to be taken to support homeless individuals during the middle two stages (while in homelessness and transcending homelessness).

Homeless Solutions Retreat, Day 1:

- Desired Outcome: A snapshot of current and desired facilities and services for each homeless sub-population at each of the four stages of homelessness, to help inform the future development of a strategic vision and action plans.³⁶

³⁰ The list of potential funders can turn out to be quite long and will hopefully grow as the strategic planning conversation develops. Some of the potential funding sources identified by interviewees include CDBG, SLC HAND, LDS Church, individual businesses, State Homeless Trust Fund, and Catholic Community Services.

³¹ This stakeholder category goes beyond the government staff with dedicated focus on homeless issues, including agencies such as Division of Child and Family Services and Workforce Services.

³² Post-retreat conversations regarding specific opportunities (e.g., creating incentives to developers to build affordable housing) are probably advisable.

³³ These individuals may not have interest or capacity to participate in the full two-day Solutions Retreat, but their perspective should be obtained in some way to help ground-truth the assumptions and objectives underlying short- and long-term strategies.

³⁴ In particular, organizations with a well-established volunteer corps and strategic plans of their own to develop facilities and services for the homeless, such as the Legacy Initiative and Clean Krew (K2 Church).

³⁵ These interests are probably best represented by an organization or one representative.

³⁶ Day 1 will hopefully set up future conversations about funding options and funding equity; desired outcomes, and how to measure them and adaptive management.

- Questions to be asked or existing answers to be confirmed:
 - Who are the homeless and where do they come from?³⁷
 - For each homeless sub-population:
 - What facilities and services are needed at each of the four stages of homelessness?
 - Which facilities and services are currently being provided and by whom?
 - Which facilities and services are currently not being provided? What are the barriers?
 - Separate out immediate and longer-term needs for this sub-population (to the extent possible).
 - What are the opportunities for coordination and/or efficiency (avoiding duplication of effort) across homeless sub-populations and stages of homelessness?

Homeless Solutions Retreat, Day 2:

- Desired Outcomes:
 - A set of principles that can guide future decisions about locating homeless facilities and services,³⁸ and
 - Prioritization of immediate needs identified in Day 1, along with development of an action plan to meet them.

Homeless Solutions Retreat co-conveners should encourage participants to follow two main principles of collaborative problem-solving:

- The most creative and effective solutions are based on a mutual understanding of the problem to be solved and desired objectives, followed by a free-flowing opportunity to co-create workable solutions. In other words, a successful conversation does not start with possible solutions.
- Participants should “strive for consensus”, meaning that they have a willingness to listen actively and explore solutions that can benefit all, rather than simply advocating for a solution that is most beneficial to themselves.

³⁷ Data from the most recent point-in-time counts should prove very helpful for the Day 1 conversations.

³⁸ Without intending to predetermine what this set of principles might include, we share here some possible options that flow from the interviews (some of which may or may not be mutually exclusive):

- Easy access to public transportation to enable homeless individuals to travel to and between necessary services
- Facilities that fit aesthetically into the host neighborhood
- Facilities and activities that maintain the dignity of their homeless visitors (i.e., do not attract undue public attention)
- Ease of use for homeless population
- Efficiency for service providers
- Equitable distribution of impacts within city/county/region/state
- Minimize unintended consequences or impact on the host neighborhood
- Appropriate zoning

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>

Situation Assessment – Homeless Issues in Downtown SLC

Mayor's Committee on Homelessness

The Mayor's Committee on Homelessness is an easy and valuable way for the City to keep a finger on the fast pulse of homelessness-related activities that may affect quality of life issues downtown or require City resources. Permanent membership on the Committee should be broad-based, with thought given to inviting visitors to the quarterly meetings as appropriate for the issues likely to come up.³⁹

City Representation in Other Conversations

The City needs to participate actively in most current and future conversations related to homelessness to ensure that strategies developed and decisions made by other groups properly reflect the City's priorities and resources. The City's active voice in other conversations can also ensure that potential side-effects or consequences are considered and prevented, before a crisis situation occurs.

We do not provide an exhaustive list of the other conversations that are currently taking place, but do suggest three that are of critical importance:

- State Homeless Coordinating Committee
- Salt Lake County Homeless Coordinating Committee
- Downtown Alliance committees addressing immediate problems in the downtown area

2. Expanding Services

Interviewees shared a wide range of suggestions for expanding services available to the homeless. The Assessment Team was not tasked to "solve the homeless problem," nor do we have the expertise to determine whether any given suggestion is valuable or not. We also noticed that by the end of the interview process, some suggestions that were merely an idea in the first interview were moving closer to reality by the last interview.

We list the suggestions we heard so they don't get lost and to prompt creative thinking. These may also be suggestions or topics that should come up for discussion during the Homeless Solutions Retreat.

³⁹ For example, the Salt Lake Valley Health Department should be included whenever cleanliness and camping issues are considered. All service providers should have an opportunity to be included, whether that is with an actual seat on the Committee (that may create too big a group) or by clearly stating the expectation that the service provider representatives who do attend Committee meetings serve a two-way information role with the full service provider community. Finally, thought should be given on how best to include the charitable organizations who represent a large "worker" force to supplement existing and future efforts to address homelessness.

Homeless services that are not currently or minimally available, but could be helpful:

- Easy access to IDs for currently homeless individuals and individuals as they are released from incarceration⁴⁰
- Case managers to provide “triage” for individuals as they enter homelessness, accompanied by the ability to provide individual-specific follow-through⁴¹
- Employment counseling
- Life skills training
- Private security at The Road Home shelter
- Day care for children while their parents seek services, housing or employment, or simply to give the parents a needed break
- Transportation support (e.g. bus passes) to help homeless individuals access services, job interviews and housing opportunities

Existing homeless services that are in short supply and/or are inadequately funded:

- Detox facilities
- Mental health services⁴²
- Housing, especially rapid re-housing options as HUD funding decreases and city and county waiting lists have closed⁴³
- Supportive services to go with housing, especially as federal funding decreases or ends
- HMIS database expansion to incorporate more information and allow for greater access and use of data⁴⁴
- Transitional jobs for homeless individuals (including part-time and full-time jobs that promote skill-building and provide opportunity for advancement)
- Legal support for expunging criminal records

⁴⁰ A valid ID is a prerequisite for employment and housing.

⁴¹ Several interviewees suggested that such a “triage” approach could direct a homeless individual into transitional housing immediately, leaving shelter beds as a refuge of last resort.

⁴² At least one interviewee suggested that no one has yet considered how to address an aging homeless population and associated issues of dementia and Alzheimers.

⁴³ A number of creative rapid re-housing possibilities were identified by interviewees, including Habitat for Humanity, LDS Church, the housing sector (foreclosed and slow-moving units), Calvary Baptist Church (32 units supposedly available), Catholic Community Services, assisted care facilities, landlords (3.5% vacancy rate).

⁴⁴ The three comparison cities included in Appendix C offer some examples for sharing data across organizations. Two other examples include the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, whose statewide HMIS enables service providers to track discharges from various systems of care and supports policy changes with quantifiable data. The Homeless Missourians Information System database links individuals with specific services (such as welfare, health care, mental health care, substance, etc.). The database includes an assessment tool that analyzes and summarizes mainstream benefits that a household is eligible for, provides locations where assistance is available, and specifies needed documents.

- Daytime services for homeless individuals (including showers, washers and dryers, safe and clean bathrooms, safe place to hang out, daily and longer-term storage of personal property)
- Resources for homeless individuals to transcend homelessness (including clothing to wear to job interviews, access to computers, an official mailing address)

3. Outreach / Coordination of Services

Our conversations with currently and formerly homeless individuals suggest that access to information about available resources is one of the most important missing links for many homeless individuals. These individuals suggested that both face-to-face contact (outreach) and printed materials such as flyers are effective.

We heard often from service providers and other interviewees about the importance and effectiveness of “outreach”, which involves going to where homeless individuals are, making a personal connection to a homeless individual and providing them with information about services that may benefit them. Several discrete outreach efforts are being undertaken, apparently with minimal coordination:

- The City’s HOST program sends a multi-provider outreach team to Pioneer Park one afternoon a week;
- Volunteers of America goes to the Main Library on a regular basis with a team that includes formerly homeless individuals;
- Mobile Crisis Outreach Team, a partnership between UNI, Salt Lake County, and OptimumHealth SLCo, provides mental health crisis resolution and follow-up services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
- Fourth Street Clinic and other medical service providers staff a MOST outreach team which connects homeless individual with needed medical services.

Face-to-face outreach efforts could easily be expanded in number and reach if someone (possibly the City) identifies ongoing instances of contact with currently and potentially homeless individuals that provide an easy opportunity for outreach. Based on the interview results, the following instances of contact might be considered:

- Homeless Court
- Charitable organization and other volunteer food/clothing/blanket drops
- Prison and jail post-incarceration release (include institutions in all counties surrounding SLC)
- Mental health and detox facility release
- Emergency room visits (SLC Fire Department and hospital staff)
- Eviction notices
- SLC Main Library (face-to-face outreach is already underway)
- Meal service at St. Vincent DePaul⁴⁵

⁴⁵ One interviewee suggested that women and families not staying at the shelter come to eat, then disappear.

- SLC Police Department bike squad
- Schools, especially Washington Elementary
- Wiegand Center (already underway)
- Fourth Street Clinic (already underway)

Some printed materials identifying available resources for homeless individuals are available in select locations.⁴⁶ There is no apparent need to create anything new, although a review of the various printed materials for completeness and accuracy is probably worthwhile. The most current resource guide(s) should be available in any and all locations where homeless individuals are likely to spend time, including the Main Library, the Wiegand Center, the Road Home Shelter, etc.

4. Charitable Groups / Volunteers

The Utah community is extremely generous, with many charitable organizations and community groups making special trips to areas such as Pioneer Park, the streets surrounding the shelter and under the viaduct to offer food, blankets and clothes directly to homeless and other needy individuals. These well-intentioned charitable efforts have over time increased in frequency and audience, such that there are unintended and uncontrolled health⁴⁷ and public nuisance⁴⁸ implications.

Some organizations have the volunteer and organizational capacity to go far beyond food drops, in one case conducting their own individual outreach efforts to “off the grid” homeless individual and developing proposals for building a homeless village, and in another case hoping to repurpose property they control to provide a homeless day shelter. Many other individuals and charitable organizations want to “help the homeless,” but don’t know what to do.

The City has recently issued guidelines that clarify permit requirements for events in which food and other items will be distributed to the homeless population. We believe there is a greater opportunity to coordinate these numerous charitable efforts and channel the enormous community goodwill to improve the overall impact and effectiveness of each individual effort. The coordination can be provided by the City or possibly by a particular charitable organization itself.

Coordination as to time and place can ensure that the food and clothing drops are distributed geographically throughout the City or valley and throughout the week. This

⁴⁶ A double-sided sheet entitled “Salt Lake Area Homeless Resource List” is available at the security desk of the Rio Grande Depot. This sheet, plus many other resource one-pagers, were available at Crossroads Urban Center. The HOST team has an expandable card identifying available resources and contact information that they hand out during their outreach events. The Assessment Team did not see written resource information in other obvious locations.

⁴⁷ Waste management is a challenge after a food distribution event that draws a large crowd, especially on weekends.

⁴⁸ We heard from many downtown residents that they do not use Pioneer Park as a neighborhood park on Sundays, due to the number and size of charitable food and clothing drops.

can ensure that the donated items reach the largest number of homeless individuals, many of whom do not spend all their time in Pioneer Park. The coordination effort can also be intentional about location of the distribution events, anticipating and preparing for the impacts of the event. Similarly, knowledge of when and where distribution events will be occurring can help existing outreach teams be more successful.

Consideration should also be given to developing a list of specific actions that community volunteers and charitable organizations can take to help the homeless population beyond food and clothing drops. We share one creative example that could lessen the impact of service providers' existing resource limitations. In a random conversation, a family therapist told one of the team members that she "adopts" one or two homeless families (usually single mothers with children) at a time, working with them as a case manager to connect the families with needed resources, to provide life skills training and coaching, and to help them find housing. As an "adopted" family transcends homelessness and stabilizes in their new situation, she then looks for another homeless family to "adopt". The therapist was convinced that many in the professional therapy community would be willing to do the same.

C. Redevelopment

The interview results confirm that redevelopment potential for the western side of downtown remains high. In addition to existing redevelopment visions,⁴⁹ we heard directly from property owners, developers and current tenants about their individual visions for the future of the area, if only ...

Past and current discussions about redevelopment in the area have gotten stuck on the question of whether and where to relocate existing homeless facilities and services. Homeless service providers, not surprisingly, resist efforts to move them once again based on financial (several own the property they occupy and have made significant investments over time) and equity considerations (a community should not shun or marginalize the homeless portion of its population by moving them out of sight).

The Homeless Solutions Retreat described in the previous section provides an opportunity for a principled discussion about how best to provide for the homeless population of our community. It does not presuppose any particular result (e.g., move all homeless facilities out of downtown). Rather, the retreat can provide a framework for co-creating a larger vision of what's needed to best serve the homeless population as it currently exists, along with outlining a set of principles that can guide future decisions about locating the homeless facilities and services needed to meet that vision.

The principled outcomes from the Solutions Retreat can then inform the community's conversations about how to meet the vision for serving the homeless population in conjunction with redevelopment of the western side of downtown. Decisions about

⁴⁹ For example, the RDA's Hub District vision.

where and how best to provide needed services for the homeless population can be decided proactively with everyone's best interests in mind.

The Assessment Team has no doubt that the many creative minds we met through the interview process (in government, business and within the general community) can find ways to integrate the best service for our homeless population with effective redevelopment. The City has initiated a downtown master planning effort which may be the appropriate process for addressing the redevelopment question, assuming that the boundaries of the master planning effort coincide with the geographic area affected by the current situation described in Section III of this report.

The interview results suggest that the following interests have relevant information to share in redevelopment-related discussions:

- Private and public property owners, many of whom may have redevelopment ideas not yet shared publicly
- RDA
- Chamber of Commerce
- Potential developers, whether or not they currently own property within the area
- Local businesses / tenants
- Residents (owners and renters), some of whom have suggestions for infrastructure improvements to create a greater sense of neighborhood

D. Quality of Life Downtown

The interviews reflected that livability and quality of life downtown were the most imminent concerns across stakeholder groups, including homeless individuals. Discussion of this issue was accompanied by the greatest emotional affect; many individuals interviewed commented on the visual impact of trash/litter/poop, camping, panhandling and blatant criminal activities, but many also described a strong personal sense of discomfort and lack of safety.

The opportunities identified in section V.B. are intended to address some underlying causes for the "mass of people" often found in the Pioneer Park and Rio Grande areas. This section focuses more directly on other symptoms or consequences flowing from the current situation, identifying opportunities to address immediate problems while also creating a social infrastructure to reduce the likelihood of their reoccurrence.

1. Enforcement / Deterrence

Several quality of life issues – crime, drugs and panhandling – fall logically within the jurisdiction of law enforcement. Community members look to the Police Department to make arrests that will end the crime, drug activity and panhandling, and expressed frustration that the extensive efforts undertaken over time by the SLCPD have not been as effective as hoped. Police officers share that frustration and pointed to various reasons why arrests have not brought an end to the criminal activity in this area of downtown, and are unlikely to do so in the future: inadequate ordinances and state laws, prosecutors’ unwillingness to move cases forward, the judiciary’s lax sentencing and inadequate jail space. Interviewees from the prosecution and judiciary also commented on the limitations presented by existing ordinances and state laws, but stated that the evidence presented to them by police officers was often inadequate to file a case or convict the defendant on the full crimes charged. Finally, there is a strong difference of opinion across and within law enforcement stakeholder categories about which enforcement approach will be most effective at deterring future crime.

The various arms of law enforcement (police, prosecutors, Homeless Court Judge) were invited to a field trip recently in the heart of the Rio Grande area to witness together the problems that residents and businesses are dealing with. This field trip has apparently prompted some cross-jurisdictional discussions, which we suggest should be continued and possibly expanded. Strategic conversations that include a cross-section of relevant law enforcement personnel can develop an enforcement approach that will have the greatest likelihood of successful convictions and deterrence value. Since the issues and players are somewhat different, we address three law enforcement issues separately.

Panhandling: Panhandling is an activity that is not easy to address through law enforcement, as the US Constitution protects the right to free speech. Salt Lake City elected officials have been unwilling to criminalize panhandling, an approach that differs from many of the other cities identified in our research.⁵⁰ Several interviewees suggested that the city already has the right ordinances on the books to address panhandling-related behaviors of concern (e.g., assault, trespass). An effective enforcement strategy may include arrests and other actions to create a deterrent effect, along with publicity to change public behaviors toward panhandling. The conversation to develop an effective approach to panhandling might include:

- SLC Police Department (eyes and ears on the ground, arresting officers)
- City prosecutors (attorneys deciding whether or not evidence is sufficient to file a case)

⁵⁰ See, e.g. Phoenix, AZ (Phoenix City Code 23-7: Aggressive Solicitation in public areas, 2013); Houston, TX (Houston City Code 28-46: Aggressive Panhandling, 2013); Calgary, Canada (City of Calgary Bylaws 3M99: Panhandling Bylaw, 2008); Ogden, UT (Ogden City Code 11-5-5: Aggressive Solicitation; 2013); Provo, UT (Provo City Code 9.70: Aggressive Solicitation, 2013); and Denver, CO (Revised Municipal code of the City and County of Denver 38-132: Panhandling; 2013).

- City Attorney (responsible for City ordinances; current City Attorney also has professional expertise in civil rights issues)
- Judiciary (Justice Court most likely to hear panhandling-related cases)
- HOST Program / Downtown Alliance (developing a panhandling-awareness-raising campaign)
- City Council staff (assist with review/revision of City ordinances, if appropriate or needed)

Camping, Loitering, & Trespassing: Many interviewees applauded SLCPD's approach of not criminalizing homelessness, while others felt that arresting homeless individuals for any victimless crime (e.g., loitering, camping) was unproductive. We heard a variety of opinions about missed opportunities for using sentencing in Homeless Court as a mechanism to facilitate and encourage homeless individuals to transcend homelessness. An effective law enforcement approach to homelessness-related issues such as camping, trespassing, loitering and public nuisance will likely require an understanding and balancing of societal goals (e.g., deterring homeless individuals from behaviors that affect the health and safety of others, providing opportunities and personal accountability for homeless individuals to access needed services). The conversation to develop an effective law enforcement approach to victimless crimes committed by homeless individuals might include:

- SLC Police Department (eyes and ears on the ground, arresting officers)
- City prosecutors (attorneys deciding whether or not evidence is sufficient to file a case)
- City Attorney (responsible for City ordinances; current City Attorney also has professional expertise in civil rights issues)
- Judiciary (Homeless Court) (court most likely to hear cases involving homeless defendants; knowledgeable about flexibility in sentencing to further societal goals⁵¹)
- Homeless service providers (resources that homeless individuals need; personal connection to homeless individuals with opportunity to reinforce behavioral expectations)
- City Council staff (assist with review/revision of City ordinances, if appropriate or needed)

Drugs: Developing an effective enforcement strategy for what was described by many as the “open air drug market” in the Pioneer Park and Rio Grande area is more

⁵¹ More than one interviewee suggested that defendants in Homeless Court could move to the front of the line to receive IDs or treatment or housing if they make a legally binding commitment to take all steps needed to transcend homelessness. Another interviewee suggested that a homeless defendant could have charges dropped in exchange for a legally binding promise to undergo needed treatment and seek housing.

challenging, but desperately needed. There are many more levels of law enforcement potentially involved (including other municipal jurisdictions such as West Valley Police Department and the DEA).⁵² With respect to spice in particular, all knowledgeable interviewees were frustrated by the double-whammy of technical limitations on acquiring timely evidence⁵³ and statutory definitions of illegal behavior that do not keep up with reality.⁵⁴ The most effective enforcement strategy for drug-related crimes may require collaboration across law enforcement agencies to develop “special ops” approaches and co-develop cases, but an informed strategic approach at the Salt Lake City level may nevertheless be valuable. A local enforcement strategy for drug crimes can be developed following a review of which tactics have been most effective in terms of deterrence,⁵⁵ which result in the most arrests,⁵⁶ which violations result in convictions and sentencing most likely to have a deterrent effect, etc. The conversation to develop an effective local law enforcement approach to drug crimes might include:

- SLC Police Department (eyes and ears on the ground, arresting officers; institutional experience with what works and what doesn’t)
- City prosecutors (attorneys deciding whether or not evidence is sufficient to file a case)
- District Attorney’s office (attorneys deciding whether or not evidence is sufficient to file a case)
- Judiciary (especially Drug Court) (knowledgeable about flexibility in sentencing to further societal goals)
- State crime lab (to extent lab facilities are a prerequisite to providing evidence sufficient for conviction).

⁵² We have not researched whether there are existing task forces that SLC can participate in, but at least one interviewee suggested there are.

⁵³ We were told that evidence for any spice-related crime requires chemical analysis of the substance seized from the defendant. Historically, no labs in Utah could conduct the requisite chemical analysis, adding significant time and cost to any spice-related prosecution. It is our understanding that this technical capacity limitation will shortly be eliminated.

⁵⁴ Interviewees suggested that the state statute requires proof that specific chemical constituents are present for a substance to be illegal “spice”, but that the substances sold on the street as “spice” are continually changing to include new chemical constituents not included in the statute. Based on our research into spice enforcement outside Utah, this definitional issue is a national impediment to effective prosecution.

⁵⁵ Many residents and businesses reported that mere police presence makes a difference. Not surprisingly, they reported that criminal activity disperses when there are frequent bike patrols and reappears when the police leave.

⁵⁶ The crime data provided by SLCPD did not give us enough information to correlate arrest numbers with enforcement strategies. If the police have conducted this type of analysis themselves, they did not choose to share it with the Assessment Team. See preliminary analysis of SLCPD crime data found in Appendix G.

2. Specific Activities to Enhance Quality of Life Downtown

Both the City and community groups have initiated efforts over the past six months that begin to address several of the quality of life issues identified by interviewees. The City has installed porta-potties and the Downtown Alliance has created a Clean Team to address cleanliness concerns. The HOST program, working with the Downtown Alliance, has developed a panhandling awareness-raising campaign which will reach full implementation sometime in the future.

Several of these efforts have grown out of dialogue that involves multiple stakeholders, yet the individual efforts do not always appear to be fully coordinated nor designed to meet mutually understood goals. One example provided by interviewees highlights the dilemma:

- Additional garbage cans have been placed in various locations downtown. The need is evident and their placement confirmed by the volume of waste brought to the garbage cans. In at least one location, the Clean Team cleans around the can on a daily basis (i.e., does not empty the can), but because City pick-up is not frequent enough to keep up with the daily volume of waste, the garbage can is constantly overflowing (begging the question of whether this is an improvement in conditions).⁵⁷

Specific activities to enhance the quality of life downtown, e.g., activities to address cleanliness issues, will be most effective if they are designed and implemented collaboratively, based on a shared understanding of the extent of the problem and intended outcomes. Regardless of which entity initiates the conversation or has primary implementation responsibility, essential stakeholders should be included *before* decisions are made and shortly *after implementation* to evaluate whether they are successful, then adapt accordingly. For cleanliness issues in particular, essential stakeholders may include:

- SLC Public Services (one provider of services)
- Downtown Alliance (convener of various existing efforts)
- SLC Police Department (to help prevent unanticipated consequences)
- SLC Fire Department (to help prevent unanticipated consequences)
- Salt Lake Valley Health Department (agency responsible for enforcement of health standards)
- Service providers (to extent the specific activity is intended to benefit homeless individuals or might use them as the labor force)

⁵⁷ Since drafting the Situation Assessment Report, the contract with Clean Teams has been expanded to clear garbage from city garbage cans in the area.

The City should consider serving the role of clearinghouse for specific activities that enhance the quality of life downtown, to ensure that all needed coordination occurs and that each individual activity has the greatest opportunity for success.

3. Neighborhood / Community Building

Community suggestions to use Pioneer Park for “big draw events” have resulted in an expanded farmers market (expanded to include the entire park on Saturdays and an added weekday evening), permanent relocation of the Twilight Concert series and other one-time events. City and community efforts in 2008-2011 to promote the use of Pioneer Park as a neighborhood park were also successful at the time, but have not been continued at the same level. City and community efforts to expand community use of the Rio Grande Depot through a winter farmers market are also successful.

As of December 2013, the downtown “neighborhood” affected by quality of life issues has a larger geographic scope than Pioneer Park. Many of the residents and small business owners interviewed did not perceive themselves to be living in a “neighborhood”, but very much welcomed the idea. They recognize the obvious – the more an area is used and perceived by all as a vibrant neighborhood, the less physical and social space is available for unlawful and destructive activities.

City and community leaders can seize this opportunity to work with existing neighborhood groups (or build a new group if necessary) to encourage the perception and use of downtown areas as a neighborhood. Several neighborhood-building activities were suggested in the interviews:⁵⁸

- Big draw events to public spaces (to encourage the larger community to visit and fall in love with the neighborhood)
- Regular daily use of public spaces (to encourage residents, businesses and visitors to build a sense of neighborhood and community)
- Community cleanup events (to encourage residents, businesses and visitors to build a sense of ownership and responsibility for the neighborhood)
- Neighborhood watch (to build a sense of ownership and accountability for the neighborhood)
- A “day of doing”⁵⁹ in which community members join together in a community-improvement project (to build a sense of ownership in the neighborhood)
- Including homeless individuals in activities, possibly by creating co-volunteer teams pairing a homeless individual with residents and employees (to create a sense of ownership in all who frequent the downtown area, and to dispel myths about and build empathy for the homeless population)

⁵⁸ Note that some of these suggestions mirror the recommendations from the 2009 Pioneer Park Partners Team workshop, attached as Appendix F.

⁵⁹ This is a community-building approach used in other cities suggested by CED Director Eric Shaw.

Some of these neighborhood-building activities are taking place currently. They will not be successful over the long-term, however, unless the responsibility for inventing ideas, facilitating their implementation and ensuring their continued availability is institutionalized within one viable organization. Since existing organizations (such as the Downtown Community Council or the Downtown Alliance) may have limited current capacity to provide the required level of effort, private or City funding may be needed to build additional capacity.

While actions often do speak louder than words, a neighborhood cannot be built without communication and information-sharing. Many residents and small businesses interviewed were unaware about existing efforts to improve quality of life downtown (e.g., Clean Team, panhandling red meters), with some individuals not even aware that community-building organizations such as the Downtown Alliance and Downtown Community Council existed. Interviewees also had a wide range of experiences communicating directly with City government, ranging from a feeling that every call to the SLCPD or Mayor's Office was responded to promptly to perceptions that City government was intentionally avoiding the problems in this area of downtown.

The City can signal that neighborhood-building in the Pioneer Park / Rio Grande portions of downtown is a municipal priority by instituting proactive neighborhood-wide communication methods. The Mayor's Office or CED or the City's Homeless Services Coordinator can offer regular opportunities for neighborhood residents and employees to receive status updates on what's happening in and planned for the neighborhood, including opportunities to ask questions.⁶⁰ Whenever questions are asked (whether in response to an invitation to ask questions or unsolicited), attention should be paid to providing a prompt answer so that community members feel heard and valued.

E. Strategic Support for Others' Efforts

The previous sections highlight the complexity of the issues and the many levels of government and NGOs who share responsibility and capacity for addressing homelessness and related issues. While the full weight of planning and taking action to address homelessness does not and cannot rest on Salt Lake City, the City must be a key player in all aspects of the effort to address homelessness. The City's perspective must be heard and considered in strategic planning at all geographic levels (county, state, regional). The City plays an important role by providing strategic funding for the valuable efforts undertaken by other stakeholders, and at times filling in gaps in essential services. The City can also lend its voice and political weight to lobby for changes in policy, regulation and statutes as needed to facilitate a comprehensive and effective approach to addressing homelessness and related issues.

⁶⁰ Status updates can be provided in writing via newsletters, on-line and through face-to-face contact. Consideration should be given to reach the broadest audience over time, recognizing that people are busy and absorb information in uniquely personal ways.

This section gives some examples of how the City can provide strategic support for others' efforts, based on the interviews. We recognize that the City is already active in many of the areas we outline. Our assessment did not look at the City's current activities in detail, and should not be taken as a critical analysis of the City's current approach. This listing of opportunities for strategic support provides a conceptual framework to help the City think systematically about where and how its support can be most helpful.

City ordinances and zoning are critical to appropriate placement of facilities and services for the homeless. Interviewees described a history of past efforts to locate new facilities, facilities that were funded and ready to be built, which fell through due to zoning and NIMBY issues. The City can play a supportive role in two ways: legitimizing the need for homeless facilities and services through its zoning decisions and through public communications that support the community vision (to be developed according to the process outlined in sections V.B. and V.C.).

City funding has direct and immediate on-the-ground implications for addressing homelessness and related issues, and can provide incentives and disincentives to focus community efforts. The City must set its own priorities for distributing limited available funding. Without suggesting that these are the appropriate priorities, we share interviewees' observations about the types of City funding they believe could be most helpful:

- Providing City services to address cleanliness issues: The CBD maintenance district does not encompass the entire geographic area affected by trash/litter/poop resulting from the daily congregation of individuals in the Pioneer Park / Rio Grande area.
- Seed money, possibly ongoing financial support, for community-based efforts such as outreach to the community about panhandling and the Clean Teams.
- Funding to support the Housing First model for all categories of the homeless population. This includes both permanent and transitional housing. Funding for wrap-around services is a critical need, especially as federal funding for services diminishes.

The City should be a key player in developing and implementing a state or regional approach to addressing homelessness. Key City staff should participate actively in state and county homeless coordinating committees. Salt Lake City can also encourage other city mayors (e.g., Ogden and Provo) to participate on the coordinating committees, to ensure that responsibility and costs for providing homeless facilities and services are shared fairly.

The City's political voice can be used to promote needed changes at all levels of government and within the community. In coordination with other stakeholders, the City may educate and persuade appropriate entities on issues such as these:

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>

Situation Assessment – Homeless Issues in Downtown SLC

- Increased state and federal funding for housing *and* services⁶¹
- Expanded health care legislation⁶²
- Change in state legislation regarding how long felony convictions remain on a person's record⁶³
- Simplification of state legislation and expanded testing facilities regarding spice violations⁶⁴
- Changes in criteria used by state agencies to access services⁶⁵
- Funding equity across communities who generate homeless individuals, but do not provide shelter or other services
- Denial of financing and other disincentives for downtown redevelopment⁶⁶

F. Public Education / Awareness Raising

The totality of interviews reflected that many community members have no knowledge about homelessness and related issues beyond what they see in Pioneer Park and the Rio Grande area (and the visceral feeling of discomfort that follows). There is also plenty of false information, which quickly grows to fast-spreading rumors believed to be truth, about the nature of the homeless population, the availability and effectiveness of homeless services, the use and potential efficacy of various approaches to the ancillary issues of cleanliness, camping, panhandling and crime. A good number of residents and businesses do not regularly receive information from any source about their neighborhood, leaving them to wonder, worry, and believe rumors. While we heard a great deal of compassion for the homeless and hope for the future of this part of

⁶¹ We heard several examples where lobbying for additional state or federal funding could be valuable:

- Ongoing funding for rapid re-housing rental units (estimated cost of \$800,000-\$1M for 1,000 units)
- Request to Pamela Atkinson Homeless Trust Fund for \$1M to support 25 new case managers
- HUD continuum of care grants no longer welcome requests for supportive services funding
- Mental health services
- Detox facilities

⁶² Several possible benefits were cited for health care legislation changes:

- Reducing the number of people who become homeless due to medical expenses
- Providing health care to homeless individuals
- Providing mental health and detox services

⁶³ Felony convictions (and in some cases, merely an arrest) often prevent an individual from finding housing or employment. In Utah, adult felony convictions remain on a person's record forever. In some other states, they are removed from a person's record after 3-5 years.

⁶⁴ Interviewees involved in enforcement stated that proof of violation for spice-related crimes is particularly difficult because the legal definition of spice relies on chemical testing which has historically not been available in Utah, and the chemical composition of the drug sold changes faster than the legal definition.

⁶⁵ Homeless individuals in particular cited to various DWS rules that complicate and delay their efforts to move out of homelessness, including rules limiting certain financial assistance to single mothers (but not married mothers whose spouse is incarcerated) and a 12/1/13 change in rules related to rapid re-housing that caused many existing housing approvals to be rescinded.

⁶⁶ At least one interviewee stated that banks are denying financing for projects in the Pioneer Park / Rio Grande area.

downtown, the lack of information and misinformation also seems to have fueled a generalized sense of hopelessness among many in the community. This has apparently caused some residents and businesses to move out of the area in the past year or two, and others are poised to abandon the neighborhood if nothing changes.

Panhandling is an issue where interviewees felt that lack of information and misinformation is particularly significant and possibly counterproductive. Many of those interviewed noted that what in other circumstances would be viewed as a strength – the Utah population’s inherent sense of generosity – operates as a detriment where generous individuals make assumptions about the nature of panhandlers (many of whom are not homeless) and the efficacy of giving money directly to homeless individuals rather than to service providers (the money is not always used for food and shelter).

Utah residents’ inherent sense of generosity and information gaps are also creating a different problem as charitable organizations and groups of volunteers increasingly take action on their own to fill what they see as a gap in services for the homeless population. Within the last two weeks of interviews, the Assessment Team learned of two new efforts underway to provide food and services to the homeless by groups with an extensive and enthusiastic volunteer base.⁶⁷

Several opportunities suggest themselves for City involvement in providing accurate information that can help dispel rumors and raise awareness among community members. We do not intend to design how the City and others provide these educational materials, but do note particular methods and venues that might be considered.⁶⁸

Model how we as a community talk about the issues. City and community leaders can and should model how we as a community talk about homelessness and related issues. If done well, all levels of City government (Mayor, police, city staff, City Council), as well as business and other community leaders, would communicate a consistent message.

Our interviews revealed several topics where lack of information or misinformation can be particularly damaging. These are topics where community opinion and individual decisions are easily influenced by the content and tone that community leaders model:

- The nature of our homeless population;

⁶⁷ Legacy Initiative provides burritos to homeless in more remote locations and envisions building a homeless village; Clean Krew provides food and other necessities to homeless in Pioneer Park and elsewhere, and envisions developing a homeless day center in the downtown area.

⁶⁸ Some cities have Homelessness 101 websites: For example, Houston, TX (<http://www.homelesshouston.org/homelessness-101/>); Chicago, IL (<http://www.thechicagoalliance.org/homelessness101.aspx>); and Columbus, GA (<http://homelessresourcenetwork.org/index.php/homelessness101/>).

- The approach that this community is taking to provide for the homeless population and to address related issues (crime, panhandling, etc.); and
- A vision for the future of this part of downtown.

A few examples from the interviews help to illustrate the range of opportunities for modeling how we as a community talk about the issues:

- Community members have heard from individuals employed by City government that a significant number of the homeless cannot be helped (either because they refuse services or appropriate services are not available); this perception about the nature of the homeless population may fuel a community feeling of hopelessness.
- When community members hear silence from their leaders about steps that are being taken to address a given issue, they often assume that nothing is being done or that the City has “abandoned” their needs or their neighborhood (especially when results cannot be achieved immediately).
- If one community member speaks to an individual police officer and hears one opinion of what’s causing a given problem, another community member talks to an elected official and hears a different potential cause of the problem, and a public pronouncement about future action to address the problem is inconsistent with either of the two opinions, confusion and lack of confidence may result.
- Many community members who live and work downtown are unaware of the RDA’s approved redevelopment plans for the area west of the Rio Grande Depot. Others are aware of those plans, but are curious about the status of other redevelopment efforts discussed five or more years ago. The current downtown master planning effort has raised additional questions and confusion.

These examples are not given to suggest that there is anything wrong in voicing different perspectives on the issues or that City and community leaders should paint a rosy picture about a dynamic and challenging situation. On the contrary, these examples highlight the opportunity to model how our community can talk and think about these difficult issues by acknowledging the challenges, while also framing the issues compassionately and constructively and describing a logical path forward.

Facilitate information-sharing about homelessness and related issues. The City can and does play a significant role in facilitating information-sharing between the various stakeholders working on and interested in homelessness and related issues. The Mayor’s Committee plays this role for stakeholders working on homelessness, and has been discussed in more detail in Section V.D.1. of the report.

According to what we heard in the interviews, no one is currently providing regular updates available to all interested community members in the area of downtown most impacted by homelessness and related issues. Access to accurate information should help to dispel or prevent rumors, and can also motivate community-level action.

Strong media involvement will, of course, be an asset to building community awareness and understanding.

Provide information that informs effective generosity. The City is already involved with efforts to provide accurate information about panhandling. The interviews suggest that a wider range of information, provided to the broadest possible audience, may help generous individuals and organizations direct their financial and volunteer contributions in the most constructive way. The plethora of homeless service providers, coupled with the in-the-moment emotional aspect of donating to help the homeless, makes it difficult for any given individual to make a well-informed donation.

While this list is not exhaustive, the types of information that could be helpful include the following:

- Donation methods most likely to benefit homeless individuals, and why
- Donation methods least likely to benefit homeless individuals, and why
- Specifics about the level of funding and in-kind donations sought by organizations working on behalf of the homeless⁶⁹
- The types of volunteer activities most likely to benefit homeless individuals, and why
- The types of volunteer activities least likely to benefit homeless individuals, and why
- General information about the homeless population and services available to them

Information to inform effective generosity should be disseminated extensively throughout the community in a broad geographic area. Salt Lake City, the entire Salt Lake valley, and neighboring counties (especially Davis and Utah Counties) should be included.⁷⁰ In addition to making informational materials available on-line and in hard copy at libraries and other public places, community organizations (e.g., community councils, business organizations) and charitable organizations (e.g., churches, existing volunteer homeless crews) can help to distribute the materials deep into the giving public.

This list, again not exhaustive, includes possible venues for strategic distribution of relevant materials suggested from the interview results:

- LDS Conference weekend
- SLC tourism materials

⁶⁹ For example, we heard during our interviews that the Wiegand Center needs video cards for the computers available for use by the homeless in its day center. Many service providers also indicated the need for funding to hire additional case managers.

⁷⁰ Several interviewers suggested that individuals from surrounding counties who come to visit Temple Square or shop at City Creek are extremely generous and assume that all panhandlers are indeed homeless.

- Particular venues where panhandlers congregate (e.g., City Creek, small stores downtown)
- Public signs at the most popular panhandler locations

Finally, the City can help to create opportunities for informed giving. One example of this type of opportunity was suggested recently by the CED Director – create a generic “homelessness” page on the *Love UT Give UT* website⁷¹ through which potential donors would both learn a little more about the issue and have the opportunity to direct funds to deserving organization.

⁷¹ *Love UT Give UT* is a 24-hour day of giving to community groups hosted by the Community Foundation of Utah. March 20, 2014 is the next day of giving.
http://loveutgiveut.razoo.com/giving_events/utah14/home

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

<http://www.law.utah.edu/stegner/environmental-dispute-resolution/>

Situation Assessment – Homeless Issues in Downtown SLC