Ending Family Homelessness
Lessons From Communities

Communities are adopting new approaches to respond to family homelessness. Resources are increasingly focused on helping families avoid homelessness and helping those that do become homeless quickly reconnect to housing in the community. Across the country, leading communities are developing, testing and sharing innovative strategies. They are collecting more reliable data on how families move in and out of homelessness, which facilitates the ability to refine interventions, evaluate outcomes, and ultimately expand successful initiatives.

The approaches being adopted are rooted in the pioneering work of the communities profiled in *Promising Strategies to End Family Homelessness* (2006).[1] By orienting their homelessness systems to focus primarily on helping families quickly access stable housing, these communities sharply reduced family homelessness. Hennepin County, Minnesota; Columbus, Ohio; and Westchester County, New York reduced family homelessness by over 40 percent. Other communities achieved smaller but significant results.

The recession reversed this progress. Lost jobs, inadequate benefits, and increases in foreclosures jeopardize the housing stability of millions of families. Across the country, there are reported surges in the number of families seeking eviction prevention assistance, families doubling up with extended family, and families turning to shelter because they have nowhere else to go.

To respond to the increased need for assistance and to help avoid sharp increases in homelessness, Congress enacted the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The program provided $1.5 billion in new resources, allowing communities to implement the key strategies that are effective in reducing family homelessness.

With new HPRP resources and an overwhelming number of families in need, many communities are transforming their response to homelessness to serve families better. These communities are working to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of all of their resources to prevent families from becoming homeless and, when that fails, to help families quickly return to housing.

This paper provides an overview of family homelessness in the United States. It examines the key strategies that communities are implementing to respond to increased family housing instability and homelessness. It also discusses the need for federal leadership.

Understanding Family Homelessness

On any given night, nearly 240,000 individuals in families are homeless. Over 170,000 families resided in shelter during 2009, a 30 percent increase over 2007.[2] All indications are that the number of families experiencing homelessness continues to be high because of the recession.

What Are the Characteristics of Homeless Families?

Multiple studies have found that families that experience homeless are very similar to other low-income families with a few exceptions.[3] African-American families are disproportionately represented. Parents tend to be younger, most families are headed by a single woman age 30 or under, and over 50 percent of children in homeless families are under the age of six.[4] A high proportion of young homeless parents were in foster care as children.[5] Studies have found that families that become homeless are also poorer than their housed counterparts and may have fewer social supports to rely upon.[6]

What most differentiates homeless families from other poor, housed families however is access to affordable housing. Studies have found that a housing subsidy virtually eliminates the risk of homelessness among low-income families,[7] and few families that exit a homelessness program with a housing subsidy become homeless a second time.[8] This remains true even among those families in which the parent has significant challenges such as a mental health or substance use disorder.[9]

How Do Families Become Homeless?

A typical family homelessness episode begins with a housing crisis. A family that may already be spending a disproportionate amount of its income for housing experiences an economic crisis. This can be caused by lost employment, reduced work hours, or a rise in household expenses. Families that are suddenly unable to afford their current housing will typically work to resolve the problem by moving to smaller, less expensive housing or moving in with extended family or friends. Most will never become homeless. Some, however, will not be successful in finding a stable new housing situation and will seek shelter.

Family conflict can also create a housing crisis that results in homelessness. Some families may seek shelter to escape domestic violence. In other cases, young parents who are no longer able to stay with their parents, friends, or extended family resort to shelter. Families whose homelessness is directly caused by violence or conflict often remain in shelter simply because they lack alternatives. Without resources to pay for housing, a shelter is their only option.

How Long Do Families Remain Homeless?

The vast majority of families who become homeless exit shelter or transitional housing programs within three or four months and do not become homeless a second time. Approximately 20 percent of families have homeless episodes of a year or more. A small number, approximately 5 percent, have multiple homeless episodes and cycle in and out of shelter and transitional programs.[10]

To maximize impact, prevention resources must be well targeted

Key Strategies for Ending Family Homelessness

In the years since the Alliance profiled six communities that reduced family homelessness in *Promising Strategies to End Family Homelessness (2006),* more communities have adopted the strategies that were key to their success. The onset of the recession and new resources dedicated to ending family homelessness have facilitated the adoption of these strategies and the growth of new approaches. By monitoring successful communities, the Alliance has identified six key strategies critical to ending family homelessness.

- Prevention assistance
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Helping families pay for housing
- Strategic use of services
- Coordinated intake, assessment, and services
- Data for planning and program management

With new HPRP resources and sharp increases in requests for assistance, the strategies that were successful in reducing homelessness in better economic times are being replicated, expanded, and adapted to a wide variety of communities—urban, suburban and rural—to respond to increased needs. With each community's adaptation, refinements are being made and new lessons emerge.

Key Strategy: Prevention Assistance

HPRP and other homelessness prevention resources can be used to help pay rent arrears or provide rental assistance to allow families to remain stably housed. They can also be used to provide legal assistance and mediation services to help families negotiate new rental terms with their landlords. Increasingly, communities are using HPRP to help families that are doubled-up or in housing they can no longer afford find new housing, allowing them to avoid shelter stays altogether.

To maximize the impact of prevention resources, programs must be well-targeted to the families most likely to become homeless. This targeting has been among the greatest challenges communities face in implementing HPRP, as the number of families facing housing-related hardship (although not necessarily homelessness) has increased enormously due to the recession. There are a range of promising strategies that communities have developed to target families at greatest risk of entering shelter. Strategies include:

- using communities' own **shelter data** to develop profiles of people at risk of homelessness;
- developing **outreach programs** that identify people at greatest risk who normally would not seek assistance; and

- providing **diversion** assistance to families who have already lost their housing and are applying for shelter.

Shelter Data

New York City's HomeBase program uses local Homelessness Management Information Systems (HMIS) data to develop profiles of families that are at the greatest risk of homelessness. Such data ensures that the eligibility criteria for homelessness prevention programs match the families most likely to enter shelter. New York City is also using the prior addresses of families to focus prevention efforts in neighborhoods where there are high numbers of families that become homeless.

Outreach Programs

Outreach efforts identify families at heightened risk of entering shelter, often through crafting collaborations with other social service agencies serving vulnerable families. The early identification of families allows providers to quickly intervene to help preserve their current housing or to focus on finding new housing so that families can avoid shelter stays.

An example of a collaboration to identify families at risk of homelessness is The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Early Head Start Program and SafeHome Philadelphia, a prevention program operated by the Philadelphia Committee to End Homelessness. When the Early Head Start program encounters families that are living in untenable and hazardous housing situations, they refer them to SafeHome. SafeHome then visits the family and offers them assistance finding new housing in the community.

Some communities are targeting families in subsidized housing. While very few families with permanent rent subsidies become homeless, those who lose their subsidy may be highly susceptible to homelessness and lengthy shelter stays. To address this, some homelessness prevention programs have crafted partnerships with local public housing authorities. Housing Families, Inc. in Massachusetts, for example, receives referrals directly from two area public housing authorities and then reaches out to the families at risk of eviction to offer mediation and budget support, case management, and financial assistance to help families preserve their subsidized housing.

Diversion

Communities are also expanding the options offered to families seeking shelter. By offering financial assistance and rapid re-housing services when families apply for shelter, communities are finding that they can divert families from shelter and can instead use the resources to help them resolve the crisis that threatens their housing or quickly relocate them into new housing in the community.

Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance in Worcester, Massachusetts is operating a successful homelessness diversion program for families. In the first six months of operation, the program served 52 families. This reduced the strain on shelter programs, and fewer families were placed in motels because shelters were full. Within six months, the number of families residing in motels dropped from an average of 40 families a night to 4 families a night. With an average motel stay costing $18,000 per family served, the diversion program generated significant cost savings to the community.

The lessons that will continue to emerge from the new investments in homelessness prevention coupled with the innovative work of leading communities to use data to improve their targeting efforts and program interventions will better equip all communities to prevent homelessness.

Key Strategy: Provide Rapid Re-Housing

The single biggest shift in serving homeless families has been the growing adoption of Rapid Re-Housing to help families quickly exit shelter and return to housing in the community. Communities such as Hennepin County, Minnesota and Columbus, Ohio have found that many families can be quickly rehoused by helping with housing search and landlord negotiation, providing rental assistance, and delivering home-based case management services. The availability of HPRP resources greatly facilitated the widespread adoption of Rapid Re-Housing.

Working with Landlords

Rapid Re-Housing providers are primarily focused on helping families quickly navigate the transition back into housing. They work aggressively to identify housing options in the community through ongoing housing search and cultivating relationships with landlords. Rapid Re-Housing providers may negotiate with landlords to reduce the rent and to persuade them to accommodate families' housing barriers. They take steps such as guaranteeing to the landlord that the landlord will not have to absorb the costs of an eviction if the placement is not successful. They make commitments to help landlords resolve any landlord-tenant disputes that may arise. The demonstrated commitment to promoting a successful housing placement, and to helping landlords and tenants resolve issues that might arise, has been critical to the success of Rapid Re-Housing providers and allows providers to find housing for tenants with even the most challenging rental histories.

Helping Families Become Successful Tenants

Rapid Re-Housing providers also prepare families for successful tenancy. They explore the families' housing history to identify and resolve issues that may present

Rapid Re-Housing significantly reduces the time families reside in shelter

barriers to finding new housing. They work with families to resolve credit issues and educate them about their rights and responsibilities as tenants. Providers continue to work with the families after a housing placement to promote housing retention and link family members with community-based supports that can help them achieve their long-term goals.

Providing Financial Assistance

Rapid Re-Housing programs typically provide financial assistance to help families pay for rent. Assistance may range from part of a security deposit to helping families access a permanent housing subsidy. Programs might also provide some financial incentives to landlords to rent to families with challenging rental histories. This may include providing several months of rent upfront or doubling the security deposit for families with very problematic rental histories.

The growing use of Rapid Re-Housing has several benefits. It significantly reduces the amount of time families reside in shelter, reducing the cost of shelter programs and allowing shelter beds to serve other families in need. It also returns families more rapidly to permanent housing, which can provide a firm foundation from which families can address other challenges and receive the support they require to thrive.

Key Strategy: Helping Families Pay for Housing

With new HPRP resources, communities across the country are now providing short- and medium-term

Many families can use temporary rental assistance to successfully transition into housing

rental assistance to help families preserve their housing or move out of shelter and into homes of their own. While temporary rental assistance options are expanding, there continues to be a critical shortage of permanent rent subsidies. This has led some communities to develop strategies to prioritize how these valuable resources are used to end homelessness.

Expanding Temporary Rental Assistance

Permanent housing subsidies provide the best protection against homelessness. Unfortunately, only a fraction of families that would benefit from a housing subsidy receive one. As a result, most families exit shelter relying only on the money they saved to rent new housing in the community.

Westchester County, New York; Hennepin County, Minnesota; and Columbus, Ohio are among the communities that found that providing families with shelter is often far costlier than providing them with temporary rental assistance. Rental assistance also allows families to return to stable housing in the community faster and is a better investment in families and children than shelter.

Evidence indicates that many families can use temporary rental assistance to successfully transition into housing and avoid a subsequent homeless episode. This evidence provided support for HPRP and the growing use of temporary rental assistance across the nation to help families stay in their homes and move quickly out of homelessness.

Targeting Permanent Rent Subsidies

With a shortage of permanent rent subsidies to offer families experiencing homelessness, some communi-

Expanding and Adapting Rapid Re-Housing

HPRP allows communities to create or expand Rapid Re-Housing efforts, transforming how they respond to family homelessness. With new HPRP and other ARRA funds, The Road Home in Salt Lake City, Utah, for example, is responding to a sharp, recession-related increase in family homelessness by offering Rapid Re-Housing to many more families. The program helped 200 families rapidly return to housing in the first six months of operation. The expansion of Rapid Re-Housing has allowed the program to meet the increased demand for assistance without expanding the organization's shelter capacity or turning families away. By connecting families quickly with income and employment support provided by the local TANF agency, the program is also helping to shore up the supports the families will require after they are housed.

There is a parallel movement emerging among domestic violence providers to expand housing options for families through Rapid Re-Housing. With limited capacity to provide shelter, domestic violence providers are adopting strategies to help families quickly find safe, stable housing. The nationally recognized Volunteers of America Oregon Home Free Program has been a leader in this movement. In addition to housing search, landlord negotiation, and financial assistance, the program helps families develop safety plans, connects them to legal and immigration law services, and provides trauma-informed support and advocacy. Recognizing the innovative approach, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is studying the outcomes of families assisted by Home Free. Initial findings indicate that families with stable housing have better outcomes on an array of measures, including severity of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression, and quality of life.

ties are developing strategies to target the permanent subsidies they do have to those who may need them the most. New York City prioritized homeless individuals and families with a fixed income (such as SSI or SSDI) due to a disability and child welfare-involved homeless families for a permanent rent subsidy. Because of the prioritization, the families received a permanent rent subsidy much sooner than they otherwise would have, avoiding long shelter stays and the separation of parents and children.

Over a two year period, the New York City Department of Homeless Services housed more than 1,800 families that either depend solely on a fixed income benefit or are involved with the child welfare system. To eliminate delays while permanent housing subsidies were processed, the Department of Homeless Services provided eligible families with temporary rental assistance that provided immediate assistance and ended as soon as the permanent rent subsidy became available. This allowed families to quickly move out of shelter and into housing of their own.

Communities may also take a "wait and see" approach to providing permanent rent subsidies. In Salt Lake City, for example, most homeless families are being assisted with temporary rental assistance. Permanent rent subsidies are prioritized for the families that do not succeed under the temporary rental assistance program.

Most families in shelter in Salt Lake City are eligible for three months of rental assistance and employment support. The program re-evaluates each family's housing and employment situation after three months and each quarter thereafter. Rental assistance and additional services are extended on an as-needed basis. The community prioritizes permanent rent subsidies for families that, after 18 months of HPRP-funded assistance, continue to have challenges paying for housing independently.

The gap between what low-income families earn and the cost of housing means that maintaining housing will be an ongoing difficulty for low-income families without permanent rent subsidies. The availability of temporary rental assistance helps families navigate challenging housing markets and exit shelter more rapidly. New tools to help communities meet the housing needs of homeless and at-risk families is a primary factor in the transformation of homeless systems nationally.

Key Strategy: Strategic Use of Services

The growth of Rapid Re-Housing has greatly influenced how homeless providers deliver services to families. New fields of service provision have evolved to help families search for housing, negotiate with landlords, and maintain housing. Because Rapid Re-Housing programs generally provide only short-term assistance, services designed to help families quickly increase their income through work have taken center stage. In addition to the array of services to help families transition into housing, communities are using support services more strategically to improve the outcomes of families. This includes providing mobile services, partnering with community-based organizations to leverage additional supports for parents and children, and an increasing reliance on evidence-based practices.

Mobile Services

Rapid Re-Housing has increased the use of mobile, as opposed to facility-based, support services. Mobile or community-based services allow social workers and other service providers to deliver assistance wherever families are residing, whether the family is in a doubled-up situation and at risk of homelessness, in shelter, or in newly acquired housing in the community. Because services do not end when families leave a shelter program, this mobility affords greater continuity in the support offered to parents and children.

Partnering with Community-Based Agencies

The diversity of families' needs has led communities to develop new partnerships with community and public social service programs to ensure families have access to the full array of quality support services they require to succeed. By connecting families to community-based supports to achieve their long-term goals, homeless service providers can focus on meeting families' housing needs.

One example of a local partnership to enhance services to families experiencing homelessness is the STRong program in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The program is a partnership between Reuben Lindh, Wayside House and St. Stephens Human Services to offer Rapid Re-Housing assistance coupled with child-centered support services to young homeless and at-risk parents and their young children. Clallam County, Washington offers another example of a successful local partnership, Living in Families Together (LIFT). The county has dedicated permanent supportive housing units for homeless families under the supervision of the child welfare agency, including families under court supervision. The child welfare agency provides the intensive supportive services to help families remain together. The collaboration has not only ended the homelessness of the families served, it has resulted in a smaller number of children placed into foster care.

Evidence-Based Practices:
Critical Time Intervention

Local homelessness programs are also improving the quality of services they provide by adopting evidence-based practice models. One example is Critical Time Intervention for Families, a time-limited case management model primarily targeted to

Support services are being used more strategically to improve family outcomes

homeless families that include a parent with a mental health or substance use disability. The model, first tested in Westchester County, New York, starts with very intensive support services which taper off after nine months as families stabilize and are connected with supports in the community.

Communities are allocating their support services to families strategically to ensure they are goal-oriented and are the most effective use of resources to end family homelessness. The continued evaluation and refinement of how service resources are used advance communities' efforts to end family homelessness.

Key Strategy: Coordinate Intake, Assessment, and Services

Until recently most communities had a limited variety of housing and service interventions to respond to families experiencing homelessness. With more service and housing options available, communities are developing intake and assessment strategies to match families with the intervention that best fits their needs and makes the most efficient use of resources. To create a community-wide process for intake and assessment first requires that local providers work together to create a common vision for ending homelessness and how local resources will be used.

Creating a Common Vision

The creation of a coordinated service system requires a significant commitment from local providers and stakeholders. A strategic plan is usually required and individual organizations must agree to work together toward a common vision. Minimizing gaps and duplication in service delivery may require individual organizations to change how they deliver services and may also require organizations to change their missions. Ongoing work is required to ensure there is consensus around how existing and new community resources will be used to assist families. With a shared vision, community providers are more effective in attracting new resources and demanding greater accountability from public sector agencies in how they respond to family homelessness.

In Alameda County, California, the crafting of the EveryOne Home Plan to End Homelessness included multiple stakeholders, including county officials, officials from the 14 cities within the County, and an array of homelessness service providers. As a result, a common vision for how homelessness could be ended in Alameda emerged. This facilitated the commitment of federal and local resources, including HPRP funds, to the key areas identified in the plan. It also helped EveryOne Home attract other ARRA resources for homelessness prevention, re-

sulting in an overall commitment of $12 million to combat homelessness in the region. Stakeholders continue to meet regularly to promote effective implementation of their community's programs. The committees evaluate emerging data, discern what is working and what is not, and identify the program-level and system improvements needed.

Coordinated Entry and Assessment Process

The development of a coordinated intake and assessment process allows families to quickly access the services they require without having to call multiple social service programs. It can also help ensure that families' needs are well understood before they enter a program and that they are referred to interventions that are best suited to their needs. A coordinated system can facilitate the targeting of more service-intensive interventions (such as transitional housing and permanent supportive housing) to families in the community who require more specialized or intensive supports. One of the primary benefits of a coordinated system is the ability to offer a broad array of housing and service options to families experiencing a homeless crisis.

Hamilton Family Center in San Francisco, California has developed an assessment tool to match families with housing and service interventions. The wide array of interventions available to families experiencing a housing crisis include eviction prevention assistance, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. Dudley Apartments, a permanent supportive housing program that Hamilton Family Center operates in partnership with Mercy Housing California, is reserved for families seeking assistance with the most significant barriers to housing stability, including families who have had multiple homeless episodes. The intensive services they offer onsite are designed to assist residents with mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence issues.

Ultimately, the creation of a unified vision and a coordinated service system to achieve goals can result in more efficient use of a community's resources and a much better experience for homeless families.

Key Strategy: Use Data for Planning and Program Management

The shifts that are underway to transform the nation's homeless service system rely on research and data that demonstrate what works. Ongoing data collection and analysis help communities refine interventions and inform how they target resources. Most importantly, data helps demonstrate what interventions are effective in reducing family homelessness. This allows communities to identify the most effective strategies to implement.

A coordinated service system can result in more efficient use of a community's resources

Informing Plans

Data has been instrumental in the development of local plans and in ultimately propelling communities' efforts to end homelessness. Accurate information about how many families experience homelessness over the course of the year and on any given night and about the comparative costs and effectiveness of interventions has led communities to shift their spending on homelessness and to build support for new initiatives that prevent and end homelessness, such as new investments in rental assistance.

Understanding the needs of different subsets of families by analyzing data leads to more strategic targeting of service-rich interventions such as permanent supportive housing and transitional housing. It also informs the targeting of prevention resources to families at greatest risk of homelessness. The data, which helps refine how communities "match" families with the right intervention, ensures that all homelessness resources are used to maximum effect.

Measuring Performance

Communities have also utilized data to create benchmarks from which they can assess their overall progress toward the goal of ending homelessness. Progress can be measured through reductions in a community's point in time count, which provides a one-day snapshot of homelessness, or through reductions in the number of families seeking shelter over the course of a year. Data can also capture improvements in communities' homelessness systems that will likely foreshadow future reductions.

Massachusetts, for example, now contrasts the rate at which families are entering the state shelter programs with the rate of exits to permanent housing. Recent increases in shelter exit coupled with declines in new entrants into shelter indicate the state's homelessness system is poised to see overall declines in the near future. Similarly, communities are capturing the length of time families reside in programs before re-accessing housing to measure progress toward ending homelessness.

Recognizing the importance of data, HPRP and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Program require local communities to capture program and system level outcomes. Data informs policymakers, voters, philanthropists, and other stakeholders about the effectiveness of their investments in ending homelessness and helps build support for increased investments in strategies that work. Policymakers' confidence in strategies to end homelessness has contributed to Congress awarding annual increases in the HUD McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Program, even as many other programs were being cut.

Federal Leadership Needed to Continue Progress

Local leaders have been relentless in their pursuit of successful program strategies that make efficient use of their limited resources. Their hard work has paid off. Continued progress will continue to depend heavily on the hard work of those on the frontline and on new lessons derived from local providers and community leaders at the forefront of innovation. It also depends on the leadership of the federal government and the assurance that communities will have the resources they need to prevent and end family homelessness.

In 2011, communities will be expected to implement the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act, which reauthorizes the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Programs at the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This restructuring of HUD's homelessness programs has been informed by strategies communities have used to reduce homelessness. Congress can have a substantial impact on homelessness by appropriating sufficient resources to ensure that communities can effectively implement these new program strategies without pulling resources from existing successful approaches to ending homelessness.

Congress and the Administration can advance the effort to end homelessness by investing in housing that is affordable to very low-income families. The Housing Choice Voucher Program and the National Housing Trust Fund are critical to expanding housing opportunities for low-income families. The impact will be maximized if resources are targeted to those with the greatest housing needs—households with incomes less than 15 percent of Area Median Income (AMI).

Federally funded programs that are intended to provide a safety net to vulnerable families are failing to prevent these families from experiencing homelessness. The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, for example, includes among its purposes providing assistance "so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives." Despite this, families served by TANF programs experience high rates of housing instability. Recent data indicate that less than one-fifth of families entering homelessness programs receive TANF support. To make progress on family homelessness, TANF agencies must improve the program's effectiveness in ensuring that low-income families are afforded real opportunities to increase their self-sufficiency and avoid homelessness. Similarly, child welfare agencies and other programs serving families with high rates of homelessness and housing instability need better responses to the housing crises of the families they serve.

Congress can support initiatives to improve the outcomes of critical social safety net programs

Data informs stakeholders about the effectiveness of interventions

in serving vulnerable families at risk of homelessness. This may be achieved with dedicated resources to allow state and local TANF or child welfare agencies to offer intensive and comprehensive services to those families on their caseloads that have the greatest barriers to self-sufficiency, the least ability to maintain housing, and the most challenges supporting their children. Congress can also stimulate innovation by supporting strategies designed to leverage both housing and support services for families with significant barriers. Programs such as the Family Unification Program (FUP) and the proposed Housing and Services for Homeless Persons Demonstration both bring together affordable housing and services for needy homeless and at-risk families.

Communities across the country have demonstrated that ending family homelessness is possible. The momentum they have created will be strengthened with the leadership and support of the federal government. Safety net programs serving vulnerable families must be improved to more effectively prevent and end homelessness, and sufficient resources must be committed to provide low-income families with housing they can afford.

Conclusion

Approximately half a million people in families are homeless over the course of a year. Despite the economic crisis that continues to place many more families at risk, there is a clear path forward for preventing and eventually ending family homelessness. The strategies outlined in this report—prevention assistance; Rapid Re-Housing; helping families pay for housing; strategic use of services; coordinated intake, assessment, and services; and data for planning and program management—have been central to the success of communities that have reduced homelessness, even during this economic crisis.

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