Problem Solving and Community Engagement
A housing focused response to encampment resolution

CIBHS 10th Annual Evidence Based Symposium

Presentation Summary

- Overview of the Pilot Project "Paxton and Bradley"
- Describe the emerging best practices used design the intervention
- Reference the Theoretical frameworks used to anchor the intervention in evidence-based practice
- Examine the current and projected outcomes at the halfway point of the 2 year project
So what is the problem with encampments?

“Locked out of LA’s white neighborhoods, they built a black suburb. Now they're are homeless”

– LA Times Sept 2019
About Coordinated Entry System in Los Angeles

We scaled up CES with Measure H
Individuals were finally being matched to housing via CES. Just not fast enough for anyone:

- Politicians
- Outreach Providers
- Local businesses
- And especially not for the residents who had been working hard to find some stability for their community.

Government was trying to respond to but there was significant coordination needed.
There were sanitation and safety needs within the community in addition to their housing needs.

Tensions were rising and everyone agreed that something had to change.
We also had to come together as a community to get this done. We proposed a project that used problem-solving intervention and community development while working towards housing for all. We were awarded $170,000 from local flexible dollars for a 2 year project.

What is Problem Solving?

Diversion by many names

Rapid resolution/family re-unification/self-resolution
Three Steps to Problem Solving

Crisis Resolution  Strengths Exploration  Identifying/testing solutions

An intervention that combines crisis resolution and strengths exploration to assist households in self-identifying and securing safe alternatives to the street or shelter.

The objective is to increase capacity to tackle problems and promote and self-determination through empowerment.
Defining Community

By 1950 there were over 90 definitions for community in the literature.

Common Themes
- Space
- People
- Interaction
- Shared identity

Common Function
- Meeting Basic needs
- Socialization and norms
- Support networks
- Safety and protection

Assessing with Community

Community Characteristics
- Space/Location
  - Your surroundings can either help or hinder
- Identify Community Strengths through consultation
  - Shared Values and Identity

Community Structure
- Consider hierarchy
- Is there a leader(s), maternal figure
- What are the other “assigned roles”
  - Politics
  - Resources in use
Problem Solving together as a community

Assessing one person at a time to get matched to Supportive housing

Finding the answer to fix it and following up with each individual

Working with community to find a range of housing, including supportive housing, RRH, Interim, Shared housing

Getting to know strengths empowering leaders to develop shared response with provider support

So how did we actually do it?

• Townhalls
• Coordinated Showers and trash pick up
• Basic Needs as crisis intervention
• Direct giving for participation in coordinated events
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minors living on the site</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If &quot;YES to minors, is the adult the legal guardian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there clear community leaders?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If animals of any kind are present, do they generally seem to be in good physical health</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If animals of any kind do the seem to have access to food and water</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there strong familial ties among members?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEGREE OF ORGANIZATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent or semi-permanent structure or setting</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation for most weather eventualities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trash Managed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoarding Present</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there assigned roles within the community?</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>
Assessment Results:

The by name list

- Used a variety of tools and meeting methods
- Asked constantly about potential roommates
- Hosted things in groups – helped define that information as well

Tools:
- VI-SPDAT
- Full SPDAT
- Housing and Employment History
- HMIS Data
Problem Solving as a Group

- Group Viewings
  - Learned who was open to roommates
  - who had a realistic view of housing

- Group Clean ups
  - Learned who worked well together
  - Learned how certain responses can create a chain reaction

<table>
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<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>January 2020</th>
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<tr>
<td>Engaged with LAFH</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housed with Project Based voucher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housed with Tenant Based Voucher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housed through RRH – Shared housing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverted to Family and Friends</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Project Roomkey</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceased</td>
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</table>
March 2020

COVID-19 Shifts the focus of service delivery

Outreach members are redeployed to meet many other needs

PROJECT ROOMKEY OPEN!

DOORS
We Submitted 33 referrals before the site opened

On the first day the hotel opened we moved in 43 people

By The end of the week we had found indoor space for 67 people

57 people were staying together as a community at a local PRK site
No one can ever say they didn’t want it

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<th>April 2020</th>
<th>July 2020</th>
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<td>Housed with Project Based voucher</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Housed with Tenant Based Voucher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Housed through RRH – Shared housing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Project Roomkey</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>57</td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
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</table>
Key Takeaways

Community work is guided by the community

We simply followed the resources

We involved the community in anyway we could

When it comes to decision making:

The more involved the community itself is – the better

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