STORIES AND STATISTICS

Understanding Homelessness in our Parks and Cities

NRPA Innovation Lab
Thursday, January 26, 2017
PANELISTS

Jesús Aguirre – Superintendent Seattle Parks and Recreation

Stephen C. Bentley – Superintendent, Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources

Brie Hensold – Principal, Sasaki, Boston
AGENDA

1. **Homelessness** – Defining the Topic Today
   - Seattle
   - Raleigh

2. **Discussion:** What Does Homelessness Mean for Parks and Recreation?
HOMELESSNESS TODAY

Sasaki research led by Gretchen Keillor, planner with support from Brie Hensold and Ken Goulding
research: context

DEFINING

SOMEONE WITHOUT STABLE HOUSING

- Individuals
  - Now: Currently without housing
- Families
  - 14 Days: Will soon be without
- Youth
  - At Risk: Attempting to flee a life-threatening situation
DEFINING

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- Youth

STABLE HOUSING
- Now: Currently without housing
- 14 Days: Will soon be without
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HOMELESS
- On the streets
- Abandoned building / vehicle
- Shelters / Missions
- Transitional Housing
- Single room occupancy
- “Doubled up” with family
- 2+ Moves within 60 days
research: context

HISTORY

PRE-CIVIL WAR

1800

- Railroads / industrialization
- Urbanization
- Rise of wage labor

Less Stable Jobs

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjAAahUKEwidhoaSpaTIAhUB7R4KHYx7DnQ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.pitt.edu%2F~super%7%2F47011-48601%2F47461.ppt&sig=AFQjCNHIAkZn6oVvfxEY9D5qEr3NFsQW0W8esig2=0xBdESNSJsoyI2rLxjewQ&bvm=Bv.104317490,d.cWw
http://www.dcbh.org/the-history-of-homelessness-in-america-1640s-to-present/
http://www.skidrowjournal.org/history-pg-2.html
research: context

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POST-CIVIL WAR

1870

- Post-war depression
- Veterans & Freed Slaves
- Unregulated capitalism

Suffering Economy

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GREAT DEPRESSION

1930
- Migrant workers become the norm
- Entire families affected
- Skid rows develop

Widespread Impact

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Widespread Impact

URBAN RENEWAL
1950
- Clearing of skid rows
- Housing regulations (zoning, plumbing)
- SROs depleted
Systemic Changes

http://www.dche.org/the-history-of-homelessness-in-america-1640s-to-present/
http://www.skidrowjournal.org/history/pg-2.html
Challenges: Services and Needs

Economic Security
- Barriers to Employment
- Navigating the System

Basic Needs
- Cleanliness & Hygiene
- Physiological Needs

Social & Life Skills
- Not Part of Society
- Social Health

Emergency Services
- Safety & Security
- Internal Mental Health
Where do our parks & recreation departments fit in?
WEBSITE RESOURCE
understandhomelessness.com
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understandhomelessness.com
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

Moore Square Park: A Catalyst for Community Dialogue
CITY APPROVES NEW MASTER PLAN
WEEKENDS IN THE PARK
PERMITS REQUIRED
THE NEED TO PAUSE, TALK, AND COLLABORATE
Rescue Mission

Salvation Army to become TEMPORARY service location
PARTNERSHIP TO END HOMELESSNESS

THE RALEIGH/WAKE PARTNERSHIP TO END AND PREVENT HOMELESSNESS
NEW CENTER UNDER DESIGN

GROUP EXERCISE: Space Adjacencies

Site Arrangement Diagram

OUTDOOR OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

EDUCATIONAL + OUTREACH ZONE

PRIVATE ZONE

PUBLIC ZONE

MAIN ENTRANCE
SEATTLE’S HOMELESS CRISIS

Jesús Aguirre
Superintendent
Seattle Parks and Recreation
Mayor Ed Murray and King County Executive Dow Constantine declare a state of emergency and request immediate support from the state and federal governments. (11/2/2015)
The shootings took place as Seattle Mayor Ed Murray gave a speech on the city’s approach to homelessness, just two miles north of the encampment.
CONDITIONS OF THE GREENBELT AND I-5
THREATS TO HEALTH AND SAFETY

• Potential for fires
• Deferred maintenance on I-5
• Garbage
• Human waste
• Drug paraphernalia
CLEANING UP
• One Night Count (ONC) tallies individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night each January
• The total count has increased by 35% since 2006 (7,910 to 10,688)
• The number of unsheltered individuals more than doubled (1,946 to 4,505)
• 2,942 unsheltered individuals were counted within Seattle city limits during the 2016 ONC
• 2015 King County shelter/housing capacity (beds):
  • Emergency Shelter: 3,691
  • Transitional Housing: 3,358
HOMELESSNESS IS INCREASING

- The most recent population estimates are available for 2015
- Over this shorter period, 2006 to 2015, the One Night Count tally increased by 27% - compared to a 16% increase in King County’s population overall

Sources: 2015 One Night Count reports – Seattle / King County Coalition on Homelessness. US Census Annual Population Estimates.
HEROIN AND OPIOID USE ARE AT CRISIS LEVELS

- Deaths from heroin overdose have tripled:
  - 2009: 49
  - 2014: 156

- While deaths from prescription opioid overdose have decreased:
  - 2009: 167
  - 2014: 97

Overdose is now the leading cause of injury-related death for 25-65 year olds nationwide.

- The number of needles exchanged has more than tripled:
  - 2000: 2,029,243
  - 2015: 6,998,794

- The percent of King County drug seizures testing positive for heroin has increased nearly six-fold:
  - 2008: 7%
  - 2015: 40%

- People seeking treatment for heroin have increased as a percent of all drug treatment admissions:
  - 2000: 0%
  - 2005: 3%
  - 2010: 7%
  - 2015: 34%

Source: C. Banta-Green, ADAM, drug trends data
Source: CDC
Source: Public Health Seattle-King County Needle Exchange Program/People's Harm Reduction Alliance
Source: WA State Patrol Crime Lab

Seattle Parks & Recreation
THE IMPACT ON SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION

- Across the City there are over 350 unauthorized camp sites, many on public property

- 80 of our 430 developed parks and *all* of our greenbelts have chronic camping

- Seattle’s steep slopes and often soggy weather contribute to the challenge of cleaning up encampments
CURRENT CITY CLEANUP PROTOCOLS

**Unlawful Camping**

- Refuse, hazardous contraband, evidence of crime
  - Police
  - Refuse
  - Property storage

- Less than 3 structures
  - Clean up

- 3 or more structures
  - Emergency / or other illegal activity
    - 72 hour notice
    - Services / Shelter
    - Outreach
    - Clean up
    - Refuse
    - Property storage
  - Non Emergency / No other illegal activity
    - Permanent posting
CAMPING THE END ZONE
WHAT IS THE CITY DOING TO HELP?

- Pathways Home
- More emergency shelters
- Added 24-hour youth shelter
- Mobile Medical Clinic
- Authorized encampments
- Navigation Centers
- Rapid Rehousing Funding
WHAT CAN SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION DO?

• Healthy Activity Zones
• Urban Vegetation Management Plans
• Improving connectivity
• Programming for performance
• Staff awareness, training, and support
1. What is the state of homelessness in our communities today?

2. How do parks and recreation departments fit in to strategies and solutions?

3. What can we do? What can’t we do?

4. Who are our important partners?
RESOURCES
available on NRPA conference portal


2. “Can Data Have a Heart?” Parks & Recreation Magazine, Gretchen Keillor, Sasaki homelessness project researcher