

Final Report of AdHoc Committee on Homelessness
and
Vehicular Occupation
Submitted to Neighborhood Council Board

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The VNC Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness and Vehicular Occupation presented its final report to the VNC Board on May 19th. The report includes recommendations for a Pilot Vehicle-to-Housing Transition Program and advocates for the development of permanent, supportive housing for the chronically homeless in or near Venice. The Board discussed the report but will not vote on its recommendations until a later meeting.

The Pilot Vehicle-to-Housing Transition Program would provide off-street overnight parking sites for vehicle dwellers for up to three months, with help in transitioning to affordable housing. These parking sites would be distributed throughout the Westside. The program, run by a social services provider, would include the deployment of a "first responder" to reach out to those living in vehicles, directing them to services and program parking lots. The proposal is modeled on successful programs in Santa Barbara, California and Eugene, Oregon.

The Committee also proposed that the LAPD create a Homeless Liaison Team of officers, working with social service providers to help homeless get services and off-street lodging. This proposal is modeled after Santa Monica's successful program.

The report also recommends several incentives and subsidies to developers of affordable housing for homeless residents, making a strong case for the immediate development of permanent, supportive housing for Venice's chronically homeless - for example, those targeted by the St. Joseph's Center's Chronic Homeless Intervention Program (the Committee's prior recommendation of St. Joseph's program was unanimously supported by the VNC Board this spring). The committee advocates a "Housing First" model that stresses the return of families to independent living as quickly as possible while emphasizing assertive case-management.

The report notes that, while Venice already carries a greater share of affordable housing than the rest of Council District 11, very little local supportive housing exists for the chronically homeless, mentally ill and/or substance addicted. Because supportive service housing locations are geographically distant from Venice, the Committee suggests that this type of housing should be a priority for the City to develop on the Westside.

Finally, the committee also recommended the creation of a new AdHoc Committee on Affordable Housing. The new committee would host public forums to create future policies and advocate for the creation of more affordable housing on the Westside.

The Committee's report can be found on the VNC website at:
http://venicenc.org/files/Homelessness_Committee_Final_Report.doc.