

*Because democracy is a work in progress and requires constituent participation, we invite your collaboration in developing and refining our plans. We have added comments in areas where we have identified that we need specific questions and welcome your input.*

## **Homelessness Abatement and Economic Growth**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to create a framework for facilitating public collaboration and input into the creation of a plan that addresses the problem of homelessness in the U.S. In the process of our examination of the problems society faces, we have identified homelessness as a critical area in need of a comprehensive solution because of the broader implications of homelessness on the economies, healthcare systems, and public resources of the communities in which it is prevalent. The outline of this document acknowledges our limitations in collectively addressing the problem of homelessness and our intention to identify all aspects of this problem and facilitate conversations with communities, individual members of society, and other stakeholders via our ongoing [web conferences](#) used to address the needs of American communities. Each American is invited to participate and help contribute depth, perspective, ideas and expertise (which all of us possess) for inclusion in these plans. We will help communities include the solutions in the final versions of the plans that they submit to Congress as an extensive outline for legislation to be created.

### **Addressing Homelessness through a Broader Societal Lens**

We believe that homelessness is the symptom of the challenges society has failed to adequately answer, in many different areas, experienced and seen through the lives of people we would rather forget. As a result, homelessness is the most effective prism through which to evaluate the success of our short and long-term policy plans. If our economic plan, healthcare plan and subsequent plans are accurately defined, and implemented, relative to the rules of life implicit in our experience, the measure of success is that we should experience a related decrease in homelessness as our economic growth increases.

As such, we will describe some of the ways we will measure our Federal Opportunity Investment Fund's (please refer to page 6 of the [Economic Plan part II](#)) success through the functionality of its elements and its quantifiable effects on the problems to which it applies. Further, in this current pandemic and [economic crisis](#), increasing levels of homelessness are likely to be seen in many parts of the country. Regional and local

solutions will be necessary to combat it, and where effective, long-term economic growth policy is deployed, the trend lines for long-term homelessness should respond by bending downward.

More directly, the actions that we take to create economic growth and correct for existing market failures are the exact same actions, when most effectively constructed and deployed, which will reduce the levels and likelihood for long-term homelessness.

Everyone has a link to homelessness either directly or indirectly due to the utilization of both public and private resources currently used to attempt to combat the problem (e.g. law enforcement, public housing, the healthcare system). More money is spent patching holes instead of rebuilding the foundation. [Economic growth](#) is stalled if everyone is not given the same opportunities to get out of a situation, and a community's resources are unable to be directed into a positive future.

A person's growth is not self-contained. Personal growth allows the people around them to progress, each one feeding off of the others' successes. If someone is supported in a multi-directional solution to their homelessness problem, they become functioning members of society that generate positive outcomes on both sides of the supply and demand curve. This would result in a positive domino effect in the economy even for those who view their lives' events are a very distant effect from the homelessness problem at large. It's not made apparent how homelessness strains everyone through errors in job markets, housing industries, consumption, mental health, overall healthcare, drug/alcohol addiction and crime without the intentional involvement of each person in society working together to utilize resources to reduce homelessness.

### **Defining Society's Role in Solving Homelessness**

For many of us, our existence has been constrained by external forces - our desires and life have been defined for us by a mechanism that is not innate (e.g. another person) for the explicit purpose of extracting value from us that will accrue somewhere else. We often work in jobs for which we're not fairly compensated, we often find ourselves in relationships that don't allow the freedom or mutual respect we desire, or feel capable of giving, and we are born into unequal circumstances beyond our perceived, individual ability to change. We have structural limitations such as geography or family socioeconomic status that steer the trajectories of our lives before we have a say in them, and we lose out on our full potential because we're actively trapped by the circumstances we didn't choose. As a result, our existence is fragile in many ways even if we feel secure; in practice, this means that very few things have to go wrong for us to become homeless.

The practical effect of having our existence defined externally is that we become unable to accurately evaluate the risks of and rewards to our actions. We feel constantly under attack, so we seek perceived stability and control by maintaining the current comforts that define our life at the expense of our desires. As a result of chasing stability, we unwittingly make ourselves more fragile and close to homelessness; our choices for personal and economic growth are narrowed and our actual desires become distant and hazy. It's as though we are delusional in the desert, where water becomes the one variable that will propel us forward, but we are unsure if the answer we see is real or a mirage.

Our experiences, then, on this path to increasing fragility, leave us with no visibility on a path upward or out. In the rare case where we recognize how fragile our life has become, we are likely unaware of how we reached this point, and equally unaware that we are capable of making positive changes in our lives. We struggle to see how our lives could be different and, as such, are unsure of the ways in which we may exit our current circumstances or maintain our dignity. In the belief that our existence is a burden to everyone around us and that we are required to span the distance back to society on our own, we respond to attempts of help as acts of charity that further question the dignity to which we so strongly cling. We each desire to be uniquely valuable, and all we require is an opportunity to be understood and the support that acknowledges our capacity to contribute. Society's role, therefore, in addressing the issues underlying homelessness, must begin with acknowledgement and support of an individual's desire and capacity to contribute to society.

### **Why must we solve the causes of homelessness?**

In a state of nature, each person is individually responsible for the entirety of their survival, consistent with full freedom of defining activities with respect to another person. In other words, every member of humanity in nature, over repeated interactions with other humans and with nature, is responsible for generating and internalizing the totality of information necessary for survival.

This state of nature has been converted into societies where there is an exchange of the requirement for each person to learn and apply the governing principles for themselves with an environment where the participants are publicly incentivized to collaborate in the construction and application of governing principles, such that each person experiences a larger return to their productive capacity applied for another person and a larger return to themselves as a result of the productive capacity of another.

At minimum, society must provide a threshold of stability for each of its members at a higher level than that in the state of nature, in order for each member to participate in

the generation and enjoyment of societal returns as described above. Practically, this means that if any one of society's members doesn't have a stable base of existence, they can't provide any economic or human input, leaving their potential contribution as a negative value and diminishing the ability of society to generate greater returns to each of its members through collaboration.

Homelessness defines this negative level of societal membership and directly implies that the construction of society is failing at the basic level of its organizing elements - that is, the existence of homelessness implies a broader failing of a society that applies to each of its members. For each of us who have a home, whether owned or rented, are less economically and humanly productive than we would otherwise be, because some error that is borne on those who are homeless must also necessarily be affecting our capability to contribute to society, but doing so in ways that are not immediately apparent to us. Instead, the results are most explicitly seen in the experiences of those who are homeless because they live, internalize and bear personally the intersection of these various errors experienced to a lesser degree by the rest of us.

If a society acknowledges the membership of its homeless population, any attempt to solve a problem that doesn't explicitly address the errors borne by those who are homeless, and the provision of any solution that doesn't explicitly address the most basic elements of humanity of the homeless, will necessarily leave unsolved problems that are implicitly experienced across all members of the society.

Homelessness is the repository in which the effects of all of the shortcuts we have taken as a society can most clearly be seen. The nature of homelessness allows us to continue to ignore and marginalize those who it affects - despite the fact that every problem facing any member of the homeless population is faced, albeit to a lesser degree, by every member of our society. The solution for homelessness, therefore, will require broad input from as many members of society as possible. We look forward to collaborating with you all to provide a sustainable solution for this problem.

## **Governing Principles**

The governing principles listed here are specific to our conception of the problem of homelessness and inclusive of governing principles listed in all of our policy plans that apply equally to the whole of the economy. For the consideration of homelessness, we have listed those that are in addition and that directly affect our framing of the solution identified in this document.

- a. We live within a closed system. Any action that happens in a closed system has effects that influence everyone. The remnants of our decisions, both good and bad, don't go away.
- b. Investment is circular in the sense that benefits for the person investing accrue to both the recipient of the investment and to the investor. The cycle of investment generates positive feedback loops that result in greater value than the sum of the inputs.
  - i. Collaboration only works if everyone within a society participates
  - ii. We all receive the benefits and bear the responsibility for collaboration
  - iii. Unwillingness to reinvest in society creates market failures through misallocation of resources (public goods problems, deferred maintenance, etc.)
- c. Homelessness results from the inability of society and its members to manage the ups and downs of life.

#### **Human Behavior Framework**

- a. Anything with value is vulnerable to the use of leverage for the extraction of value unfairly.
  - i. Resources couldn't be replenished or collected at a high enough rate to overcome the rate of extraction unfairly
  - ii. Solving homelessness is R&D for the rest of the economy
    - 1. What we learn by solving this gets deployed to the rest of the economy as solutions to the individual market failures that led to homelessness as the symptom of these failures
  - iii. We must invest everything into this, such that homelessness is solved
  - iv. We assume that people don't want to live on the streets, because how many of us would want to live on the streets
    - 1. Have any of us ever met anyone who said they would look forward to living on the streets?
- b. The fundamental concept of pulling yourself up from your bootstraps must be combined with support and investment from others because none of us operate in isolation and we all benefit from collective investment. Humanity benefits at each iteration of applied support.
  - i. Initial participation in society is the initial contribution on the part of the person
  - ii. The next step is society's investment (support) into that person (by definition)
    - 1. Thus, society, at the point of homelessness, must act first
    - 2. Must step up at increased cost to itself, via its previous avoidance of required participation in the social contract

- a. That in exchange for giving up some freedom and willfully contributing to others, there should be equal returns to the person contributing
- b. Society is now responsible for every error that led to the homelessness
- c. Society must provide unlimited support at each level back up
  - i. Where the person who is homeless only has to opt-out
    1. Where the assumption is a willingness to participate in society, and opting out denotes a denial of this starting point
  - ii. And can opt back in at any time
  - iii. Doing so incentivizes both parties to work together towards a common goal

### **Healthcare through the lens of Homelessness**

What follows are our initial thoughts on how to solve [healthcare](#) needs for those experiencing homelessness. Unlike our other plans, this document is shorter, less in-depth and requires more contribution from interested parties. The simple answer is that our expertise in this area is focused on the economic returns to solving for homelessness and the intellectual framework for doing so. We require much more knowledge for this solution than we possess - even to adequately propose a series of specific actions.

As we will all find in this process of fashioning policy to solve problems we have never faced in the way we do currently, we know very little individually about the myriad factors that solutions to shared social problems require. Yet, our collective knowledge is more than sufficient to frame and apply solutions. Our purpose in this document is to set the terms of the conversation, such that a positively-directed solution emerges from our shared consideration.

### **Initial Proposed Operating Structure for each American experiencing Homelessness**

All support services need to be available in a single location, where someone who is experiencing homelessness can sign up for and get counseling on each. Their ability to continue using the services is contingent on both their own willingness and a question and answer approach towards a shared goal that determines the amount of support, education, follow-up that each needs to keep moving forward towards a goal or job or environment that they desire. The initial trigger of homelessness needs to be identified for each person to determine their path of progress. The initiation of which services are to be utilized first is a choice from each person. The providers have to rotate around the cognitive starting point of each person seeking the services. None of the services are independent of each other and pieces of each can be incorporated from the beginning.

**Mental Illness**

a.

**Commented [1]:** What is the relationship between mental illness and homelessness, and how should it be addressed to maximize patient health and resource allocation?

**Drug Abuse**

a.

**Commented [2]:** What is the most effective way to treat drug abuse in the context of homelessness?

**Chronically homeless**

a. Effect of mental illness and/or disabilities

The rest of this document must necessarily be the product of collaboration with communities as they identify the areas where their own unique environments define the nature of the homelessness experienced by its members and the solution to it.