



**Help Hope Home**  
Helping The Homeless in Southern Nevada

# **Program Evaluation Capstone:** The Cost of Homelessness in Southern Nevada

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# Agencies Interviewed

- Catholic Charities
- Salvation Army
- HELP of Southern Nevada
- Shannon West Homeless Youth Center
- Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth
- Nevada HAND
- Women's Development Center
- Safe Nest Temporary Assistance for Domestic Crisis
- The Shade Tree
- Family Promise
- Lutheran Social Services
- U.S. Vets
- Clark County School District Title I HOPE

# Sources



- 2014 Southern Nevada Homeless Census data
- Existing research on homelessness
  - National and local information, most current
  - Housing First models implemented in the U.S.
- Community/nonprofit agencies that work with homeless populations
  - Contacts provided by SNRPC
- Public agencies/data
- Bitfocus Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

# Limitations: Barriers to Data Acquisition

- Varying methods in agency data tracking
  - Different degrees of data sophistication and staff structures from one agency to another
  - Agencies often operate on different budget cycles
- Grant funding requires specific data measurements
- Homeless data tracking requirements for some Clark County/public agencies were not implemented until recently
- HMIS is primarily concerned with services and has limited cost data
- Veterans Affairs does not currently enter service data into HMIS

# Chronic Homeless by the Numbers

- **760** Individuals on any given night in Southern Nevada
  - Of these, **95%** are unsheltered (724)
  - **9.4%** increase from 2013 (695)
- Consume **75%** of public resources due to substance abuse, physical and mental health barriers
- Represent only **8%** of total point-in-time homeless population
- Based on our study, the long-term cost of managing homelessness on the streets is **3 times greater** than the cost of permanent supportive housing.

# Summary of Public Costs

PUBLIC SERVICE	AVG COST (\$)	COST UNIT
<b>Short-term Treatment:</b> Triage/Mental Health Crisis and/or Stabilization/ Detox	\$318	Per Admission (Avg 3 days, \$53/day)
<b>Inpatient Treatment:</b> Substance Abuse/Rehabilitation	\$8,125	Per Admission (Avg 65 days, \$125/day)
<b>Ambulance to Hospital</b>	\$936	Per Transport
<b>UMC Emergency Room Visit</b>	\$1,998	Per Visit
<b>Jail</b>	\$1,530	Per Stay (10 day avg, \$153/day)
<b>Meals</b>	\$4,179	2 meals per day for one year
<b>Emergency Shelter—Nights</b>	\$7,311	\$20.03 per night for one year
<b>Inclement Weather Shelter—Winter</b>	\$1,588	1 Person per Season (133 days/ \$11.94 daily)
<b>Inclement Weather Shelter—Summer</b>	\$2,563	1 Person per Season (153 days/\$16.75 daily)
<b>Public Clean-up:</b> Property/streets/tunnels	\$1,500	County labor & equipment costs to remove 1 encampment

# Public Costs: Medical

- **University Medical Center** (Primary provider of health care for indigent/homeless patients)
  - \$1327 to \$3895/day, depending on unit/care level
  - The most frequent users average \$1998/ER visit
- **WestCare**
  - Short-term–Detox: Average stay is 3 days at \$53/day
  - Long-term–Rehabilitation: Average stay is 65 days at \$125/day
- **Clark County Business License Office** – Maximum allowable ambulance service rates for 2014-2015:
  - \$936 average/ride
  - Range of rates by service category: \$799.74 - \$1,116.21

# Public Costs: Incarceration

- Clark County Detention Center and City of Las Vegas Jail
  - \$135/day and \$170/day, respectively – average incarceration cost of **\$153/day**
  - From 2013 -2014, each facility averaged 2,934 homeless inmates per year
- Estimated average stay for homeless inmates: **10 days**
  - Most are charged with misdemeanors
- Cost of **\$3.62 million** in 2013;  
**\$4.38 million** in 2014



# Public Costs: Clean-up

*Maintenance of flood control channels and public right-of-way*



\$1,500 for one-time clean-up

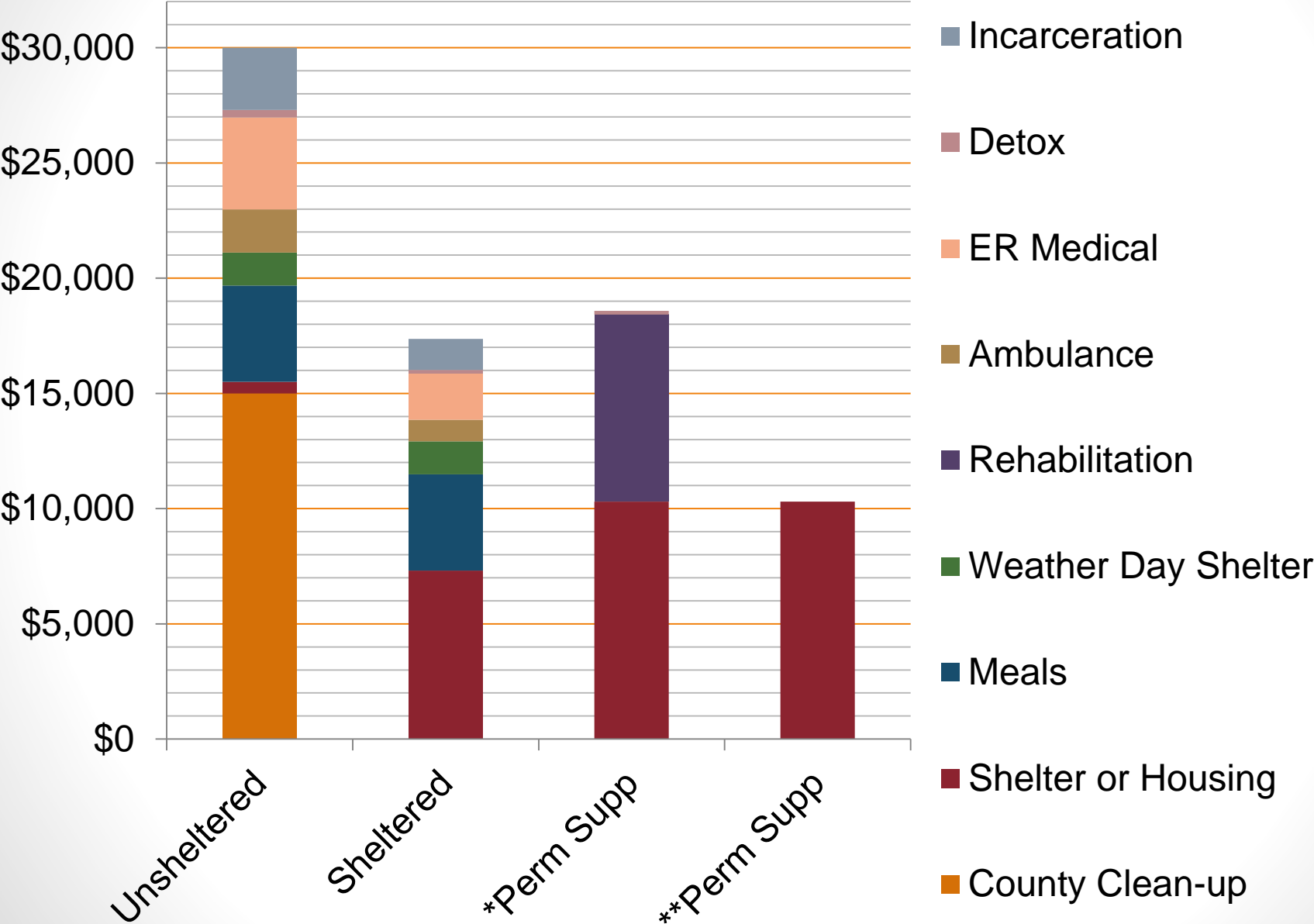
# Case Study: One Year Chronically Homeless

**UNSHELTERED:** 2 meals per day; use of inclement weather day shelters for 100 days (50 each season); 10 months on the street incurring monthly clean-up of the encampment; 2 months in the following: emergency shelter, 2 ER visits via ambulance, 2 short-term detox and incarceration (average visits).

**SHELTERED:** 2 meals per day; use of inclement weather day shelters for 100 days; nightly use of emergency shelter; one ER visit via ambulance; one instance of detox and incarceration.

**PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE:** \*65 days in a stabilization detox program before entering a permanent supportive housing program for chronically homeless such as Horizon Crest (\*\*long-term cost).

# Case Study: Cost Comparison Example



# Recommendations

- ✓ Continue to integrate public agencies involved with the homeless solution into HMIS to complete the cost picture
- ✓ Conduct long-term case studies (1-2 years) of homeless individuals who utilize HUD's Continuum of Care programs to gather more representative data
- ✓ Once data has been collected and analyzed, focus on resources that have been proven most effective – especially regarding supportive housing programs

