

CITY OF LONG BEACH

HOMELESS SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2525 GRAND AVENUE • LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA 90815 • (562) 570-4003

R-26

June 15, 2004

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

SUBJECT: Homeless Services Advisory Committee Annual Report on the Status of Homeless Services in Long Beach (Citywide)

DISCUSSION

In accordance with Municipal Code Section 2.18, attached is the annual report to the Mayor and City Council on the status of homeless services in the City of Long Beach. The report (Attachment A) covers the period of 2001 – 2003. The Homeless Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) members (listed on Attachment B) wish to thank the Mayor and members of the City Council for their interest as well as the opportunity to present information about homeless services and the plight of the homeless in Long Beach.

The HSAC also wishes to express thanks to the City Manager and his departments for their continued support and commitment to homeless services in the city. We appreciate the Council's concern about homeless issues and your attention to this report citing the progress being made and the needs yet to be addressed in assisting Long Beach homeless toward self-reliance.

This matter was reviewed by Senior Deputy City Attorney Donna Gwin on May 5, 2004 and Budget Manager Michael Killebrew on May 6, 2004.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action on this matter is not time critical. However, City Council support of HSAC and city staff involvement in the recommendations is crucial to their success.

FISCAL IMPACT

Support costs for HSAC, including staff from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the City Clerk's Office, and costs associated with meetings, public hearings, materials and postage, totaled \$11,377. These are borne by the host departments where staff are budgeted. The costs of the recommended actions have not been estimated.

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RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

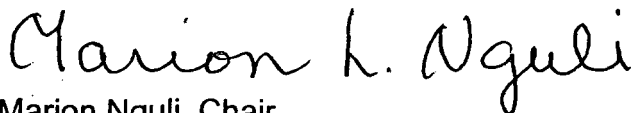
With the continued support of the Mayor, City Council and the City Manager, the following steps will facilitate progress towards an end to homelessness in Long Beach:

- 1) Ensure continuance of the City Manager-lead Interdepartmental Homeless Services meetings to develop and implement solutions to homelessness while promoting better utilization of City departmental resources.
- 2) Support the development of the Housing Trust Fund while increasing the number of affordable, low-income permanent housing units for homeless and low-income residents of Long Beach.
- 3) Increase the allotment of Section 8 vouchers for the homeless.
- 4) Review current zoning ordinances to allow and support a year-round homeless shelter and the conversion of motels into permanent efficiency housing units in the City of Long Beach.
- 5) Continue to research and access Federal, State, County and City funds to support homeless services.
- 6) Continue financial support through the General Fund and Community Development Block Grant funds for operation of the Multi-Service Center and Social Services Grant Program.
- 7) Consider adding another slot to HSAC for the inclusion of a homeless/formerly homeless person as a member of HSAC.
- 8) Support the development of a 10-Year Strategic Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in Long Beach.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL:

Receive and file report and refer recommended actions above to the Housing and Neighborhoods Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



Marion Nguli, Chair
Homeless Services Advisory Committee

Attachment A

CITY OF LONG BEACH HOMELESS SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THE STATUS OF HOMELESS SERVICES IN LONG BEACH 2001-2003

SCOPE OF HOMELESSNESS:

- On March 12, 2003, the City's first "Point in Time" Homeless street- and service-based enumeration was completed by the Institute for Urban Research and Development (IURD). This process determined that there were 5,845 persons (64.6 percent adults, 35.4 percent children) that fit the federal definition of "homeless" living on the streets of Long Beach on that day. The data indicates this count includes 795 families, which included 2,069 children. The count found 4,509 people to be living on the streets (e.g., parks, riverbanks and alleys) and 1,336 in emergency and transitional residential program sites.
- In 2003, unduplicated statistics reveal that 1,626 homeless individuals and 770 families (total of 2,665 unduplicated persons within families) received services at the Multi-Service Center (MSC) (See Exhibit). Duplicated visits for individuals were 14,430 and 2,864 families (total of 9,884 duplicated persons in the families). Recent data from the Multi-Service Center (MSC) demonstrates a vast increase in the number of homeless families seeking assistance; between August 2002 and July 2003 the percentage of homeless families served by the MSC increased 294 percent compared to the previous reporting period.
- The Continuum of Care gaps analysis chart for 2003, which indicates the difference between the services readily available and those needed to service 100 percent of the homeless in Long Beach, clearly demonstrates that Long Beach has a desperate shortage of shelter beds and permanent affordable housing for single individuals and families. The City of Long Beach has approximately 1,400 shelter beds (emergency and transitional) within the Continuum of Care system. The lack of affordable housing and the extreme shortage of shelter availability, forces our city to rely on surrounding community/county resources to fulfill the needs of the clients presenting for services at the MSC. Another unintended consequence of lack of shelter space is that there are people living in cars, on the streets and in encampments that are accessing ongoing supportive services such as mental health and employment in the absence of housing resources.

COUNTY FUNDING FOR WINTER SHELTER PROGRAM AND YEAR-ROUND EXTENSION:

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), which was formed by a joint powers agreement between the City and County of Los Angeles, funds the Winter Shelter Program from December 1 to March 15 every year. For the first time, LAHSA has made funding available Countywide to fund additional year-round emergency shelter beds.

New Image has operated the Winter Shelter Program for the past decade for Service Planning Area (SPA) 8, which includes Long Beach. In 2001-2002, the New Image-operated Winter Shelter program was located in Wilmington. 98 percent of the clients were bused to that shelter from the City of Long Beach. In 2001-02 and 2002-03, the City contributed \$10,000 to LAHSA to provide case management services to Long Beach clients accessing the Winter Shelter Program. The 2002-2003 Winter Shelter Program was located at Goodwill Industries in Long Beach. This was significant, as the Winter Shelter Program had been operated outside of Long Beach for the previous three years. Again this year, the Winter Shelter Program was sited in Long Beach, opening late on Christmas day on the westside of the city, in close proximity to the MSC. The MSC had extended hours to accommodate the increased volume of clients during the Winter Shelter Program. The program for 2003-2004 had the capacity for 200 male and female individuals nightly while providing two meals daily and access to case management services. Families are provided temporary shelter through the LAHSA-funded motel voucher program.

The Long Beach community directly benefits from having the Winter Shelter Program sited within the city to provide additional emergency shelter beds. Although funded by the County, this program enhances the effectiveness of the homeless services provided by the MSC and citywide, to move people off the streets and into stable housing.

Although New Image has historically operated the Winter Shelter Program in the city of Long Beach, New Image did not apply to LAHSA for funding to operate additional year-round emergency shelter beds in Long Beach. The Institute for Urban Research and Development (IURD) did apply to LAHSA for funding, to provide year-round emergency shelter beds. The funds were anticipated to start in March of 2004 and extend through 2005. The total number of beds funded for this program was 59, thus IURD is tasked to locate a smaller site conducive for such use on a year round basis.

HOUSING COORDINATION:

The fundamental resource needed to address the issue of homelessness is affordable permanent housing. The Long Beach Housing Action Plan presented by the Community Development Department, Housing Services Bureau to City Council on June 1, 2004, outlined the challenges in the City, both demographically and structurally, regarding affordable housing. In this report, it was noted that the nature of housing stock, availability and affordability has a significant adverse

impact on low income and homeless residents. Sixty percent of the housing stock is singles and one-bedrooms, making it difficult for larger families to locate suitable housing. Almost 30 percent of renter households are overcrowded. Code enforcement may contribute to homelessness by enforcing occupancy standards. Vacancy rates in Long Beach are generally the lowest in Los Angeles County at 3.7 percent. Competition for vacant units often leaves homeless clients at a disadvantage in securing permanent affordable housing.

Episodic homelessness occurs when an individual or family is faced with a temporary set back such as lapse in employment, medical injury, change in family status or rental increase. A limited amount of Emergency Shelter Grant funds is utilized by the MSC agencies to assist individuals and families with eviction prevention, move-in deposits and/or first months rent. These funds expire quickly, yet are the most critical resource in preventing homelessness and returning episodically homeless individuals and families to permanent housing, when they have the monthly income to sustain housing stability. Through this program, MSC case managers have developed positive working relationships with landlords and consequently are more amenable to renting vacant units to the homeless population specifically. Annually, upwards of 36 households are assisted in this manner through the MSC with as little as \$30,000.

Subsidized housing resources are needed to secure permanent housing for the most vulnerable populations, as the city does not currently have enough affordable permanent housing to meet the needs in the community. In 2002, City Council approved a pilot program to facilitate placement of homeless individuals and families into permanent housing by utilizing Section 8 vouchers. The Housing Authority, in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), allocated 20 Section 8 vouchers to be utilized specifically for placement of homeless families and medically frail homeless persons referred through the MSC. This allotment was fully utilized in 2002. Twenty-one applications were submitted for 2003. In 2004, the Council increased the number of vouchers from 20 to 30 annually, and although applications have been submitted, the Housing Authority currently is holding the release of any new Section 8 vouchers. The Federal government is proposing significant cuts in the Section 8 program in coming years. This is of great concern as these vouchers have allowed MSC agencies and shelter providers citywide to permanently house the most vulnerable homeless families and disabled individuals, while providing in-home case management and supportive services from participating MSC social service agencies. Without this resource for subsidized permanent housing, large families and disabled adults on fixed incomes would remain homeless, unable to compete in the current rental market.

The DHHS Human and Social Services Bureau (HSS) is collaborating with the Housing Services Bureau and the Housing Authority on numerous projects, which impact the availability and affordability of housing for homeless individuals. Discussions have begun regarding the conversion of blighted motels into affordable efficiency housing units, participating in the development of a Housing Trust Fund, reviewing impacts of the Housing Action Plan and development of low-income housing projects. HSAC encourages this type of collaborative effort to develop additional housing resources for the homeless that will prevent at-risk individuals and families from becoming homeless in Long Beach.

FUNDING ACTIVITIES:

The HSAC ordinance dictates that HSAC review policies, programs and activities connected with services for homeless persons in Long Beach. This includes a review of existing programs, prioritizing local needs in conjunction with federal requirements and reviewing information on grants and other monies received over the course of the year. HSAC provides oversight of the Continuum of Care process, Emergency Shelter Grant/Social Service Grant process and makes recommendations for utilization of the Mayor's Fund.

The Continuum of Care (CoC) is a planning tool to assist the City in developing a comprehensive system of service delivery for all homeless populations. This application is submitted annually to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, following a competitive Request For Proposals (RFP) process and community feedback forums hosted by HSAC to establish community priorities. The 2001 Continuum of Care application was funded for \$2,724,149, which included three new and six renewal projects. The 2001 CoC contracts were executed in 2003 to provide a youth transitional program, begin development and implementation of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), expand domestic violence transitional housing and renew six projects currently in operation at the MSC. The 2002 CoC was funded for \$2,881,234 and consisted of three new and five renewal projects. It is anticipated that these projects will come on line in 2004 to include additional permanent housing for disabled adults, transitional housing for single women, employment services located at the MSC and five renewals for currently funded projects. The 2003 CoC funded \$3,788,316 for three new permanent housing projects, adding 67 new beds, expansion of childcare slots at the MSC and 10 renewals for projects currently providing homeless services in Long Beach. The 2003 award was the largest Continuum of Care grant award the City has received to date. Detailed descriptions of funded projects for the 2001 – 2003 Continuum of Care are listed in Attachment 2.

As mentioned above, the HMIS, funded by the 2001 CoC, is currently in the development stages of implementation. Long Beach is collaborating in a regional implementation of a HMIS, which includes Los Angeles and Orange counties, City of Glendale and City of Pasadena Continuums of Care. The HMIS is an Internet access database which links homeless service providers throughout the Long Beach Continuum while streamlining the intake and referral process for clients. Additionally, HMIS will provide better tracking of service delivery, provide outcome data and determine the cost/benefit analysis of currently funded projects. This is a mandated system implementation for all HUD-funded agencies to be on-line by October 2004.

HSAC has made four Mayor's Fund recommendations in the past year, all of which were approved as recommended. These recommendations included Travelers Aid Society (\$15,000) to ensure continued provision of supportive services integral to the MSC, New Image (\$5,000) for motel/food vouchers for families during the Winter Shelter Program, HMIS (\$134,000) required matching funds over three years of the Federal grant award of \$546,390 and Food Finders (\$30,000) to ensure continued delivery of food resources to non-profit homeless service providers citywide. All of these services provide direct benefit to the homeless population of Long Beach. HSAC will be convening a subcommittee of members to clarify the process for future allocations of the Mayor's Fund.

The DHHS HSS has been diligent in identifying and applying for additional funding opportunities to fill gaps in the City's comprehensive approaches to service delivery to address the complex needs of the homeless in Long Beach. For the first time, HSS applied for the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) funds to support motel/food voucher assistance for MSC clients. EFSP awarded the City \$4,300 for motel/food vouchers in 2004.

DHHS also collaborated with other city departments to apply for a Department of Labor (DOL) grant, HOME grant, and completed a comprehensive application for the first Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) grant funds. The HOME grant award has not been announced. DHHS was not funded in the highly competitive DOL and ICH federal grant application processes. Nationally, the DOL grant funded four projects and the ICH funded eleven projects.

COMMUNITY INPUT:

HSAC is pleased to report important progress toward greater involvement of the city's business community and its part in the task of finding solutions to end homelessness. In 2002, the Downtown Long Beach Association (DLBA) was one of five organizations in the nation to receive an award, which provided technical assistance in the development of a strategic plan to address homelessness for downtown Long Beach. In 2003, the International Downtown Associates (IDA) presented their final report, which outlined several recommendations relating to homeless issues with a specific focus on downtown. Some conclusions cited in this report include: 1) the need for a year round, 24-hour seven-day-a-week shelter and day drop-in center; 2) inclusion of homeless/formerly homeless in the decision making process 3) a grassroots campaign to counter "NIMBYism"; 4) creation of a Leaders Roundtable of diverse stakeholders focused on addressing homeless issues and developing a set of guiding principles for short- and long-term planning to address homelessness; and 5) undertaking of a review of ordinances and codes that obstruct or impede the development, siting, and operation of homeless services and facilities.

In May 2003, the IDA reconvened in Long Beach to assess progress relating to the recommendations outlined in the final report. At that time, HSAC members, City staff, outreach workers and elected officials were interviewed to assess progress. HSAC agrees that many of the IDA recommendations are in line with current priorities identified through public forums and testimony of advocates at HSAC and City Council meetings. Continued support by the Mayor and City Council on these specific issues will yield further success in addressing homelessness and associated impacts on downtown business and tourism revenues.

The Interfaith Community Organization (ICO) has been steadily advocating for a year-round shelter and the need for additional affordable housing units. This organization, composed of 12 local churches, has come to City Council to advocate for these identified needs in Long Beach. ICO representatives have presented their vision of a shelter system to HSAC. They have been invited to participate in the Ad Hoc Review Committee for the Continuum of Care process to establish local priorities and align them with funding criteria. ICO has collaborated with the Community Action Network (CAN), which is composed of currently and previously homeless

clients, facilitated a Homeless Advocates/Police Community Forum on July 29, 2003 and a Homeless Services Breakfast on January 28, 2004. The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) also collaborated in this planning effort and facilitated the panel discussion that ensued. As a result of this meeting, police and the homeless have gained a better understanding of each other's perspectives. Consequently, the Police Department has been working more closely with the Homeless Services Coordinator to address the impact of homelessness citywide.

Involvement from the Police Department, homeless advocates, the faith-based community, the Downtown Long Beach Associates (DLBA) and other community organizations has led to improved collaboration and greater sharing of resources for the overall improvement of homeless services. Outreach workers are working collaboratively with police to identify and offer resources to the chronically homeless, which are frequently a service resistant population. DLBA guides work directly with the city's outreach team to assist the homeless population in the downtown area to deal with the impact during a time of downtown business growth.

HSAC acknowledges an increase in awareness and interest in homeless issues among the City Council itself. District One Councilmember Bonnie Lowenthal proposed the initiation of the Homeless Emergency Assistance Response Team (HEART) Initiative, which is an expansion of social service outreach teams to lessen the impact of homelessness on Police Department resources. Preliminary discussions have begun between DHHS, Police Department, Homeless Coalition representatives, and the Cal State Long Beach Department of Social Work about the development and implementation of the HEART Initiative.

SUMMARY

The current state of the economy and sunseting of welfare benefits, as well as the closures and reduction of state, county and local health care and social service programs, make it imperative for the community to better understand the systemic barriers faced by community residents at risk for becoming homeless and those currently experiencing homelessness. Progressive planning is necessary to address the needs of Long Beach residents at all income levels. Housing affordability and availability will be critical in the effort to decrease homelessness. With the implementation of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), the planning process beginning in 2004 for the Continuum of Care will be better equipped to track service delivery volume and associated outcomes of social service agencies as well as develop long range planning to fill gaps in services to end homelessness. The information from the HMIS will streamline service delivery and differentiate which services are most effective in creating desired outcomes. This becomes critical as funding priorities shift to a housing first model. Combined efforts between City leadership and community advocates will promote future progress, building on the strengths of the current foundation.

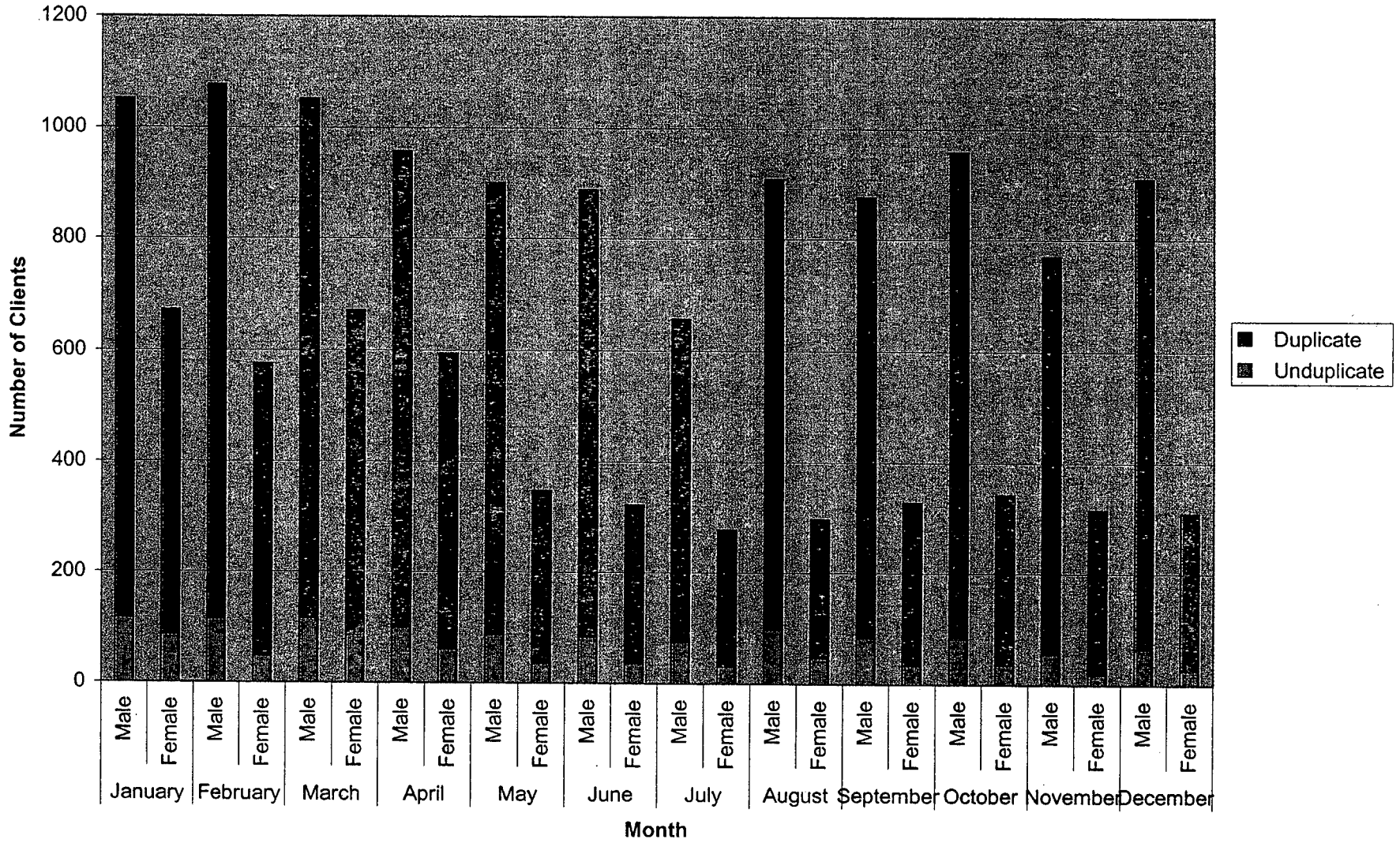
The fact that the City Manager's office, at the suggestion of Councilmember Lowenthal, convened the Interdepartmental Homeless Services Task Force is representative of the City's commitment to improve its response to homeless issues and utilize the City's resources citywide. This commitment will provide a direct impact on the success of homeless services, both short- and long-term.

This report must not fail to recognize that numerous agencies and non-profits operate in Long Beach, tirelessly providing emergency shelter, transitional shelter, permanent housing, food, clothing and other homeless related supportive services to hundreds of Long Beach residents, helping to reduce the effects of homelessness in our City. At every public hearing HSAC has conducted over the past two years, and at numerous public meetings featuring discussions of homeless issues, the need for a year-round shelter has been the paramount issue. LAHSA has made this funding available and local community support will be necessary to ensure the success of this program.

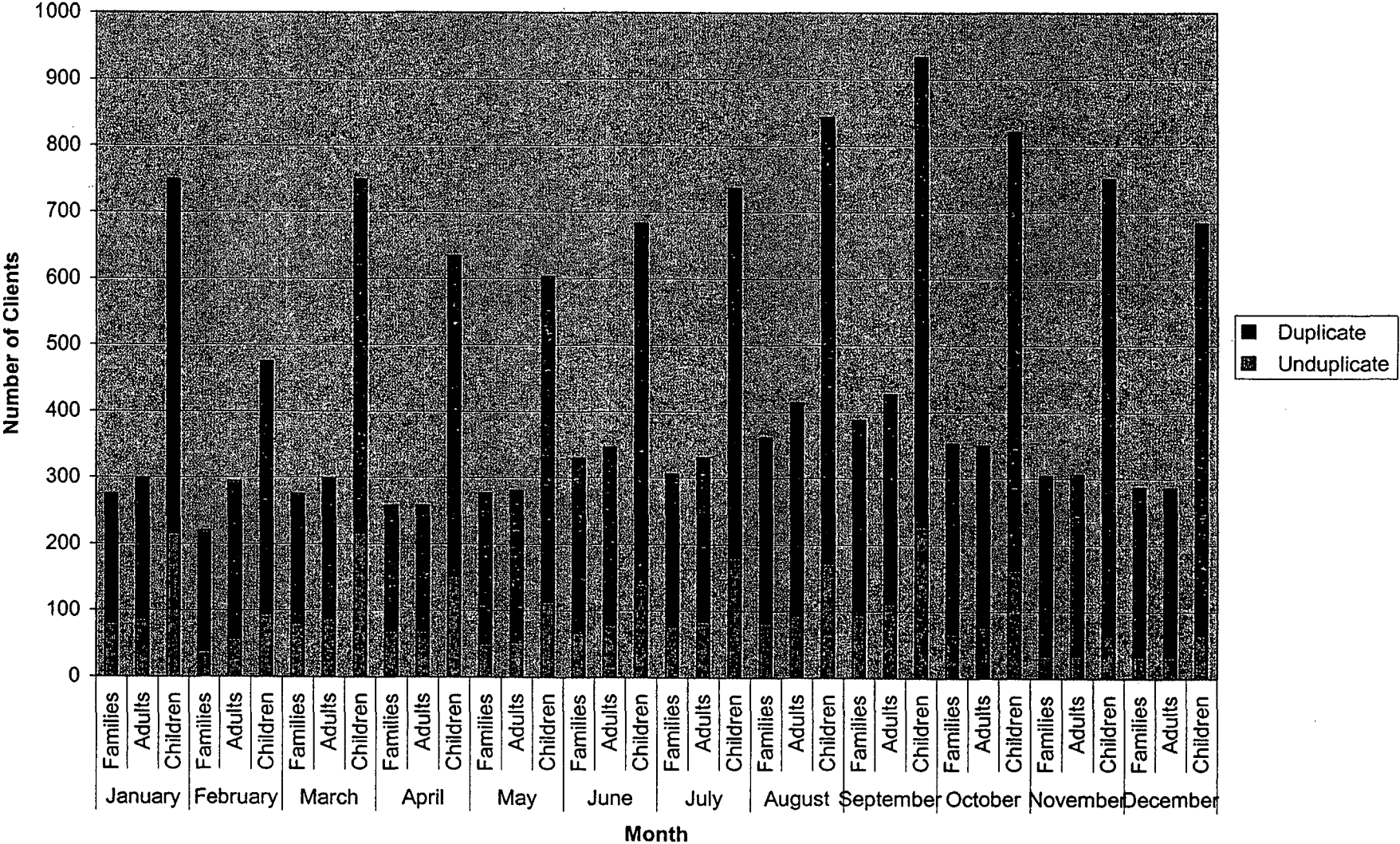
In 2004, the City of Long Beach, Department of Health and Human Services, will be embarking on a community-wide planning process, known as the "10-Year Strategic Plan to End Chronic Homelessness." This charge is forged by President Bush and overseen by the Interagency Council on Homelessness (IAC), a collaborative of 20 federal agencies focusing on the national crisis of homelessness. The IAC was convened by President Bush, who appointed Phillip Mangano as the Executive Director, to spearhead the national effort to develop and implement local 10-year strategic plans. Cities throughout the country have formalized plans for their community and begun to implement their plans. Many cities are beginning to see successful impacts on decreasing homelessness. The U.S. Conference of Mayors has also endorsed the national movement to develop 10-year strategic plans to end chronic homelessness.

Without additional year-round shelter beds and affordable housing, homelessness will continue to have a debilitating effect on the health and economy of the city. The additional shelter beds and growth of affordable housing will make it possible to stabilize homeless individuals and families and break the cycle of homelessness. According to national statistics, Long Beach is ranked 10th nationally for the highest rate of poverty, and has a considerable population (22.6% of residents) living below the poverty level, which contributes to the growing number of homeless in Long Beach. Homeless prevention, commonly referred to as "closing the front door," is equally as important to decreasing the number of homeless as "opening the back door" to permanent affordable housing in Long Beach.

Homeless Services Report - Single Adults



Homeless Services Report - Families



Attachment B

Homeless Services Advisory Committee Members by District and 2003 Attendance Record

Name	District	# of meetings attended	Excused absence	Absent
Gary Shelter, Vice Chair current member	2	9	3	1
Elaine Ridder, current Member (new member 2/04)	3			
Carole Nevin, current member	4	12	1	0
Steve Askin, current member (new member 7/03)	5	6	0	0
Marion Nguli, Chair, current member	7	11	2	0
David Lucas, current member	8	8	4	1
Patricia Long-San Jose, current member	9	13	0	0
Donald Cochran, current member	At Large	11	2	0
Thomas Herzog, current member	At Large	10	1	2
Amelia Nieto (resigned 4/04)		4	0	9
Nancy Sheriff (resigned 7/03)		6	0	0
Carrie Swain (resigned 1/04)		8	1	4

City Staff

Corinne Schneider, Manager, Bureau of Human and Social Services
 Susan Price, Homeless Services Coordinator
 Serafina Sarmiento, Secretary, Bureau of Human and Social Services
 Nancy Muth, Deputy City Clerk, City Clerk's Office