

# NOMADIC DISPLACEMENT



Guidelines for Incorporating the Homeless in Public Open Space

Pimjai Taksana

# **NOMADIC DISPLACEMENT**

Guidelines for Incorporating the  
Homeless in Open Public Space

A Senior Project presented to the faculty of  
the program of Landscape Architecture at the  
University of California, Davis in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Bachelors of Science of  
Landscape Architecture.

Presented by  
Pimjai Taksana  
at  
University of California, Davis  
on  
the thirteenth of June, 2008

Acceptance and Approval by:

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Professor Rob Thayer, Senior Project Advisor

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Professor Jason Maccannell, Committee Member

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Professor Stephen Wheeler, Committee Member

This project focuses on creating a set of guidelines to provide the homeless a place in society. This is achieved by researching past and present conditions and public policies that have affected the homeless population.

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**ABSTRACT**

This project is dedicated to my mother and to the little man of LDA. Thank you mom for being there for me and believing in me when no one else would believe in me.

This project is also dedicated to the little man of LDA. Do not be discouraged by others and try your best.

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## DEDICATIONS

I would like to thank the people who have helped me through out my senior project:

Professor Jason Maccanell for being on my advisory comittee. Thank you for teaching me how to conduct field research and for giving me encouragement.

Professor Robert Thayer for helping me find a direction towards my senior project.

Professor Stephen Wheeler for being on my advisory comittee and for guiding me through research.

The user groups of People's Park for not only providing information that was vital for the project but also for being friendly and helpful during the interviews and conversations.

Somphol Paul Churattanatham and Penny Chenpanas for providing support and help during this quarter. I would have gone insane if you two weren't there to help me mentally and academically.

Without your help, I would not be able to create and present the senior project. Thank you so much!

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Homelessness has fluctuated through out American history. During the Great Depression, many people were left homeless because they were unable to find jobs to pay for food and housing. Economic reform programs introduced during the New Deal Programs and the hyper-industrialization of the nation during World War II remedied this situation by providing numerous jobs and a stable economy for Americans. After the war ended, the war ended, the Housing Act of 1949 was instituted to ensure that Americans would be able to purchase homes at affordable prices; this lowered the homeless population. However, the homeless population resurfaced again during the 1980s and has continued to grow to this day. The reason for this growth is due to the fact that homelessness is a social issue with poorly planned solutions; although the problem maybe alleviated for a time, it is never solved and continually compounds upon itself. This project addresses the problems that contribute to homelessness based on the history, current conditions, and a case study. Furthermore, I will prepare solutions that will not only decrease the homeless population, but also allow them to find a place within society.

## INTRODUCTION



Past public policies and environments have contributed to the rise of homelessness today. This section focuses on the existence of skid row, the Housing Act of 1949, deinstitutionalization, and legislation for the homeless.

### **Skid Rows**

Skid rows were established in the early 1900s in many urban cities. They served as a temporary residence for migrant workers while they did seasonal work. The demographics of skid rows were usually single men who "... supplied muscle power for industries such as a large-scale agriculture, lumbering, railroad, and highway construction and maintenance..." (Rossi, 1989).

Skid rows were located in the industrial sectors of the city because the land was inexpensive to purchase; they were also close to public transportation. An example of this is the Los Angeles skid row in the downtown area, which is located near the train station and food production factories. Not only were skid rows located close to transportation and

work but they also provided inexpensive resources that transients could use.

One of the most important resources provided by skid rows has been single room occupancy or SROs. These are inexpensive hotels that offer a bedroom or a bed with a shared bathroom for the duration of the work season. Along with the SROs, other services provided by the skid rows include bars, brothels, temporary work agencies, affordable restaurants, clothing stores, and social services (Rossi, 1989). Over time, the demographics of skid rows have changed from migrant workers to homeless people. Although the skid rows originally provided a safe haven for people who did not fit into society, these areas would be redeveloped under the Housing Act of 1949.

### **The Housing Act of 1949**

The Housing Act of 1949 is a piece of legislation that has attempted to make housing affordable and safe for Americans. In Title I of the legislation, the government allocates money for cities to redevelop areas that are considered uninhabitable. Under this act, cities demolished blighted and poor areas

## HISTORY

such as skid rows in urban centers. An example of this is the demolition of the SROs in the Los Angeles skid row because "...the SRO hotel buildings were seismically deficient or otherwise fell below building codes standards, and ordered their upgrading or demolition" (Wolch, 2004). However, many of the SROs were not rebuilt to accommodate the number of people living in the skid row; the number of SROs decreased from 15,000 to 7,500 by 1975 (Wolch, 2004).

### **Deinstitutionalization**

Another public policy that affected the homeless population was the deinstitutionalization of mental hospitals. In 1963, President John F. Kennedy created the Community Mental Health Centers Act (CMHC Act). This allowed mental patients to receive medical treatment without living in a mental hospital. Along with the access to the CMHCs, patients would "...be eligible for federal benefits such as food, rent, etc." (Stubbs, 1998). Kennedy believed that in addition to curing patients after they have been diagnosed with a mental disease, they

could also be treated with preventive care. According to "The Story of Deinstitutionalization" by Pat Stubbs, the guidelines for the CMHCs are:

- inpatient service
- partial hospitalization (hospital during the day only;)
- outpatient services
- emergency services
- consultation and education

There are many problems with the CMHC Act. One problem is that the number of CMHCs built was not enough to accommodate the number of mental patients who were released from mental hospitals (Stubbs, 1998).

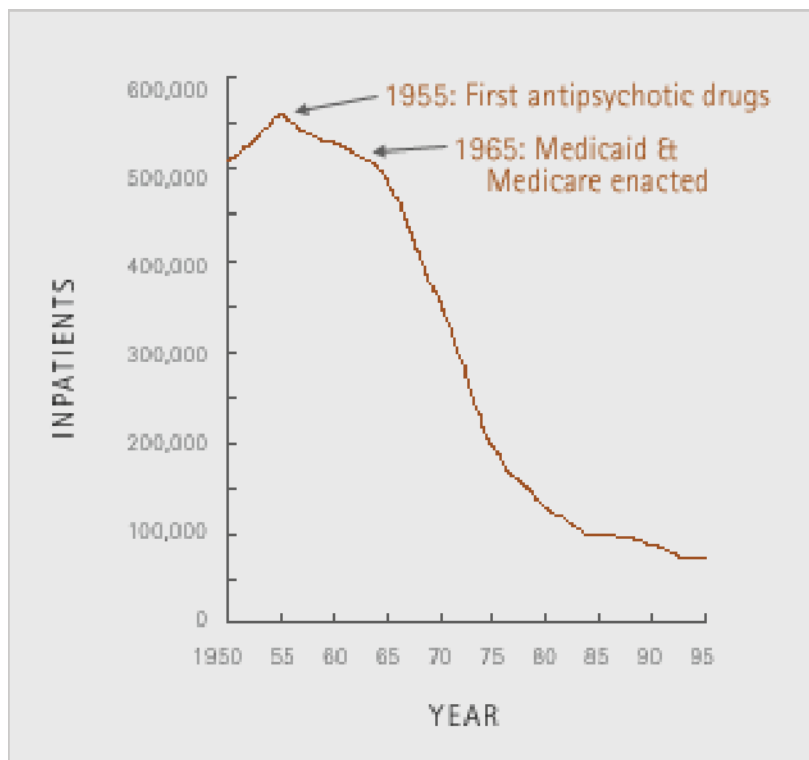
Another problem is that many of the facilities did not follow the guidelines. In 1975, 50% of the CMHCs did not have beds. They also had very few emergency services. 6% had provided treatment and were poorly staffed (Stubbs, 1998). This explains why many of CMHC facilities were not as well equipped to treat many outpatients as state institutions.

The last problem with the CMHC Act was that there was no communication

between the CMHCs and the state mental institutions. Many patients were released without referrals, preventing most patients from accessing medication and counseling after being discharged from state mental hospitals.

The CMHC Act was not the only legislation to contribute to the mentally ill homeless population. Created during the Civil Rights Movement, the Lanterman-Pantheris-

Short Act of 1967 stated that patients should not be involuntarily committed to a mental institution (Stubbs, 1998). Many of these patients, whose mental disorders ranged from schizophrenia to substance abuse, were released once this policy passed. Combined with the lack of adequate CMHC facilities and the destruction of skid rows, the homeless population became visible on the streets in the 1980s.



**FIGURE H.1** The number of patients in mental hospitals over the years graph

## **Legislation for the Homeless**

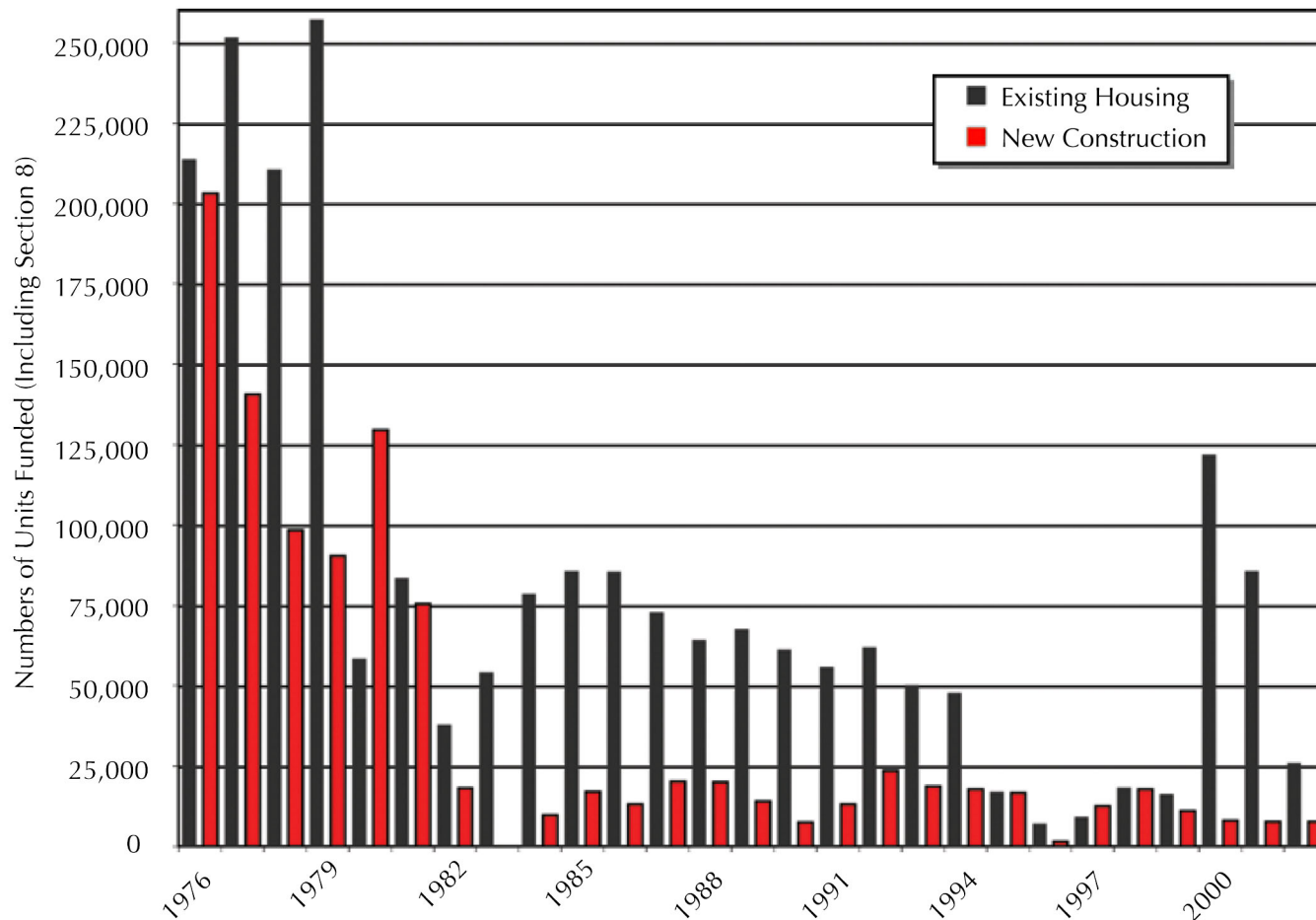
During the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan drastically changed the economy and social programs. He reduced taxes and cut funding for social programs, which in turn affected government agencies such as The Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Department. Reagan believed that this would stimulate the economy by increasing American spending power. However, it had the opposite effect: The United States began to borrow money from other countries and incur debt. The budget cut in the HUD Department rendered them unable to develop subsidized housing that was affordable to the public. As a result, the amount of affordable housing was smaller than it had been in years as shown in **FIGURE H.2**.

In 1982, the Reagan administration noticed the existence of the large homeless population resulting from these policies and created the Federal Task Force to research how to alleviate the situation. In 1987, the Stewart B. McKinney Homelessness Assistance Act was the first piece of legislation passed

to address the issue homelessness. This act provided money for cities to create emergency shelters, as well to provided for transitional housing and mobile health care programs (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2006). The problem with this act was the lack of sufficient federal funding to create transitional housing and health care programs which the homeless could utilize (WRAP, 2007) as shown in **FIGURE H.3**.

In the 1990s, President Bill Clinton revised the McKinney Homeless Act to incorporate social programs that would address the lack of federal funding. These programs would help homeless people gain the skills needed to become independent and support themselves financially without needing to rely on government subsidies (WRAP, 2007). The act was then renamed as the McKinney-Vento Act. The programs that were incorporated to help homeless people included:

- Healthcare services that catered to not only general health but also mental health and substance abuse.
- Education programs for adults and children includes job training courses.

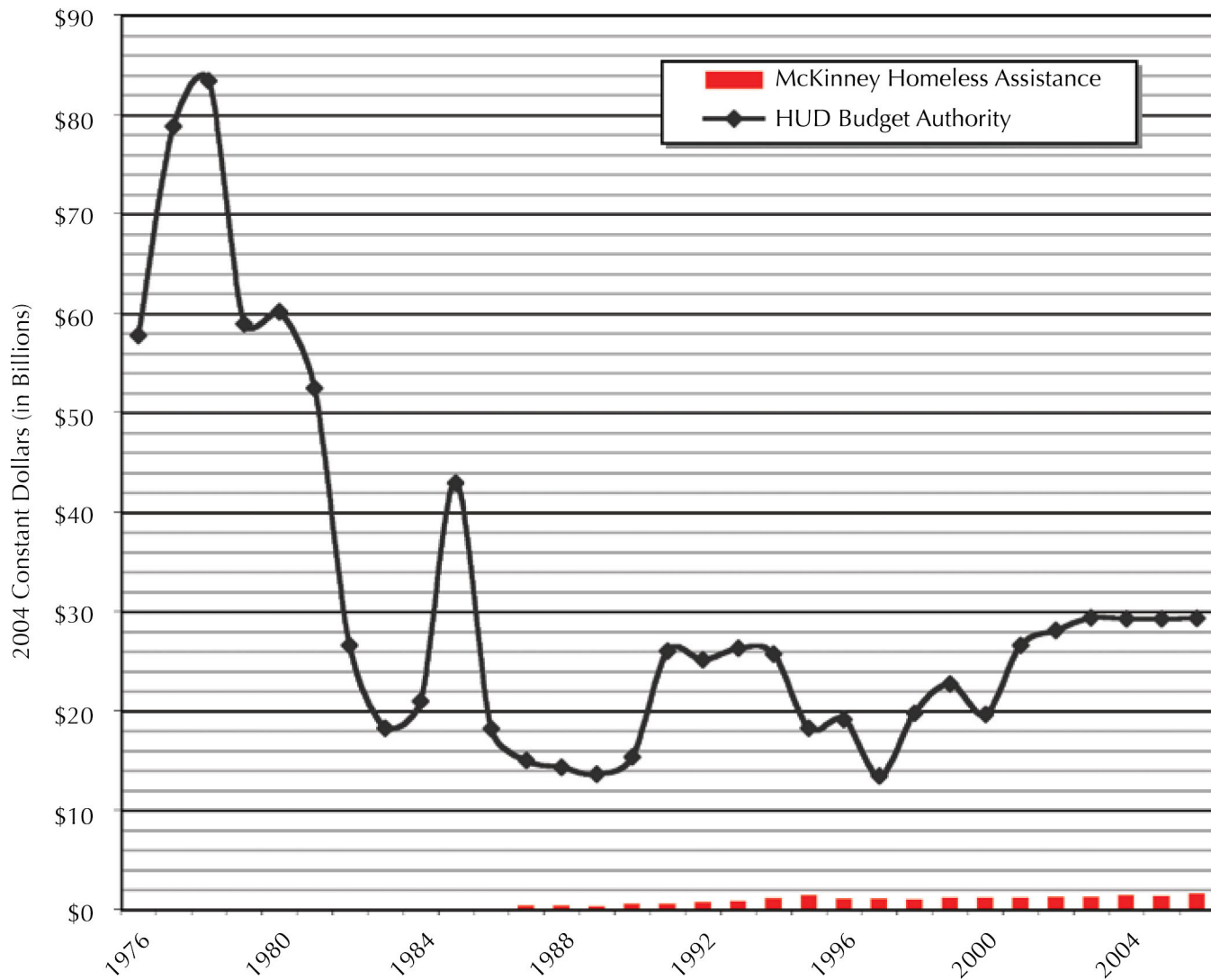


**FIGURE H.2** The number of subsidized housing over the years graph

- Education programs for adults and children includes job training courses.
- Revise food stamp programs to allow use by homeless people.
- Extends the Veterans Job Training Act.

accommodate the homeless population that needed it. This is due to the fact that the government has not been providing enough funds to renovate existing public housing or to create new ones.

Although the bill was changed, the changes was still not enough to



**FIGURE H.3** HUD Budget Authority and McKinney Homeless Funding graph

All these policies shaped the way the homeless population have been treated in society in the past. Public policy has caused open space, housing, and even mental health care for the homeless to

diminish. These deteriorating conditions are what homeless people must survive in today.

The conditions that homeless people experience today are different from the conditions in the past. This section will discuss the demographics of the homeless population, the public perceptions on homelessness, the criminalization of the homeless people, the exclusion of homeless people from open space, and the social services provided to the homeless population.

### **The Demographics of the Homeless Population**

The demographics of homeless people today are different from decades ago. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, there are more people of different ethnicities, gender, etc. than there were in the 1950s shown in **FIGURES C.1, C.2, and C.3.**

Other statistics:

- 40% of homeless men have served in the armed forces.
- 33% of the homeless population have families with children.
- 39% of the homeless population are under the age 18.
- 13% of the homeless population are employed.

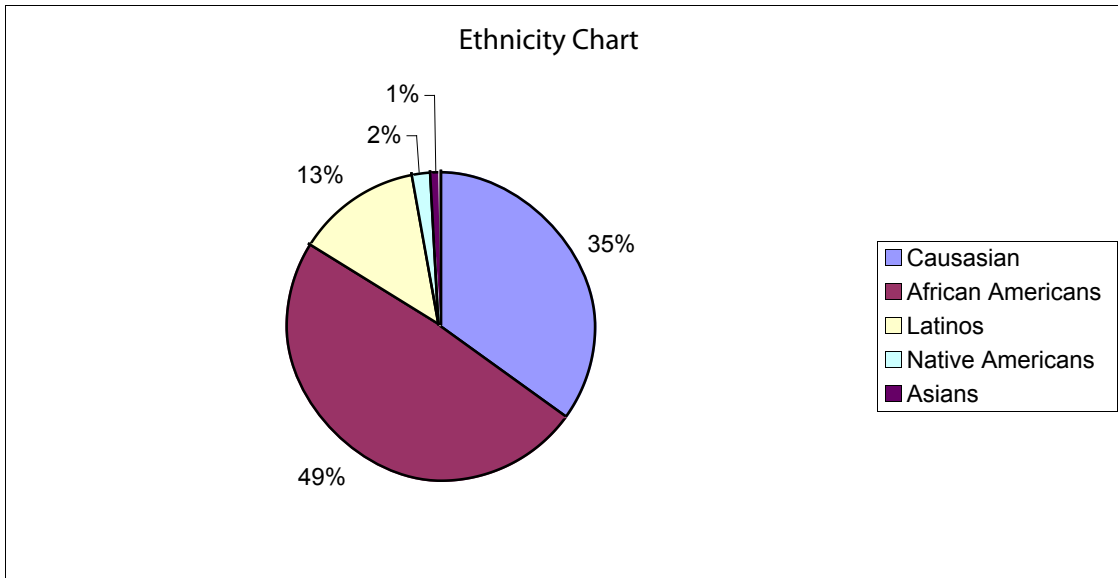
### **The Public Perception of Homelessness**

The ideal American neighborhood is a

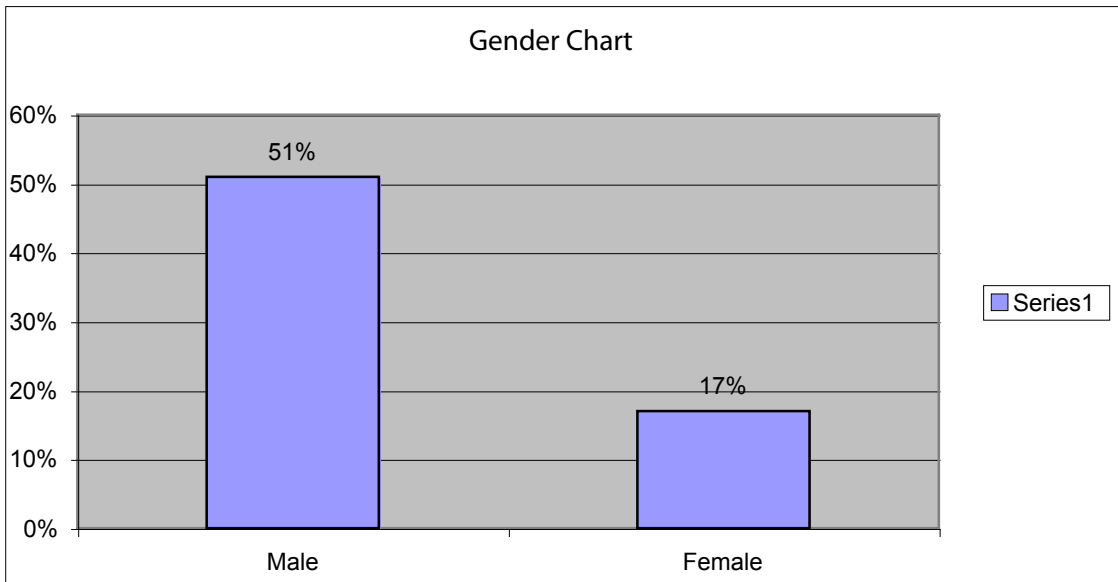
family oriented area with homes surrounded by green lawns and white picketed fences. When something strange or unfamiliar encroaches upon this ideal neighborhood, many Americans feel threatened. This concept is referred as "Not in my backyard," or NIMBYism. Nimbyism is the prevalent stance many Americans take towards social issues such as homelessness. An example is a response written about an opinion article entitled "Scattered homeless housing; don't concentrate sites". The article favors scattering transitional housing and services in different neighborhoods instead of concentrating them in one area. David H. Lukenhill – the author – believes that the scattered method will help ease the transition from a homeless lifestyle to a non-homeless lifestyle. The response written about this article takes a negative towards homelessness:

We at the our neighborhood preservation society, agree with david, in theory. we think david's group are much better people than us and will have better influence on the homeless. We suggest that david's group bring the homeless into their scattered neighborhoods and provide for the necessary services

## HOMELESSNESS TODAY

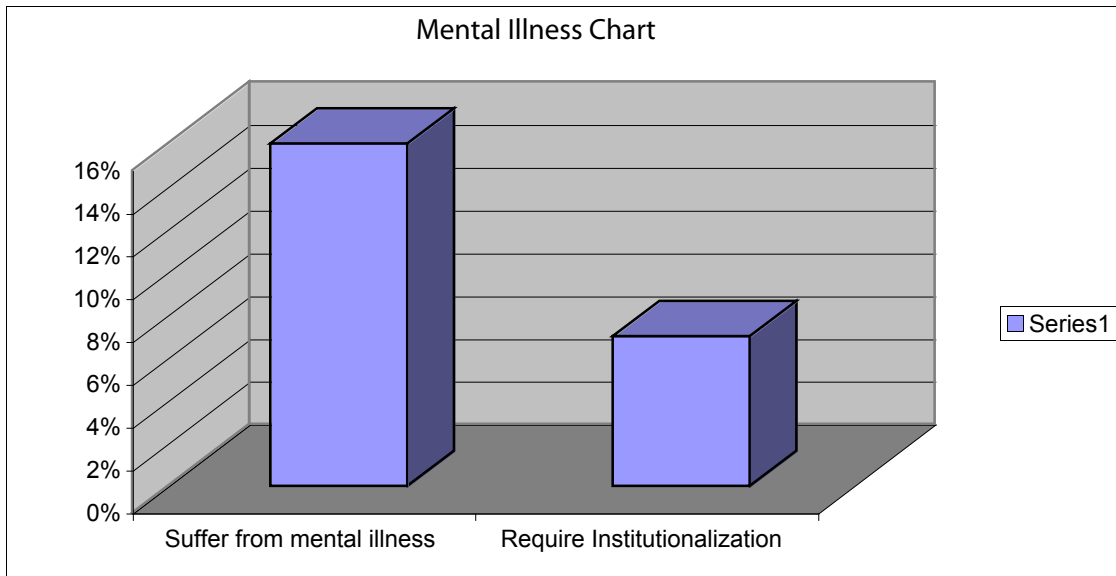


**FIGURE C.1** The ethnicity composition of the homeless population chart



**FIGURE C.2** The gender composition of the homeless population chart





**FIGURE C.1** The mentally homeless population chart

they need. We are also sure the neighbors of the people in david's group would also like this idea. and i am sure that the rest of us would be willing to help out as we are able. the government would also help out with this. if this doesn't work out, maybe we could build shelters for the homeless, scattered around the parkway, and use parkway funds to provide for the necessary transportation for the services. unless what david's group really want's is to get the bastards of our society out of their park, and not in their neighborhoods. if that is the case then we would have to rethink the whole idea.

-Prop13\_fan, April 10, 2008

Prop13\_fan demonstrates how people think that any social service or housing offered to homeless people is fine as long as it is not placed in their neighborhood. Nimbyism not only affects where and how homeless services are implemented in the community, but also how the homeless are treated by the law.

### **The Criminalization of Homeless People**

"To serve and protect" is a phrase Americans associate with law enforcement. However, many police

officers do not "serve and protect" certain social groups such as the homeless. Instead, police officers have bothered and arrested homeless people for living on the streets. One example of this occurred in Los Angeles. For the homeless, cardboard boxes serve as shelters that provide not only protection from the cold but also a sense of privacy that every human being is entitled to. In the winter of 1987, officers of the Los Angeles Police Department confiscated these cardboard boxes from many homeless people despite previous deaths during the cold spell of that year. The planning commission's defense of this action was that "...in the City of Angels it is not against the law for sleeping on the street per se-only to erect any sort of protective shelter" (Davis, 164).

A similar incident took place in North Natomas. On November 5, 2007, a news broadcast aired entitled "Homeless Face Eviction from Sacramento Camp". The broadcast stated that homeless people are being evicted off the Pacific Union Railroad Company's property. Bounty Hunter Leonard Padilla offered his land to the homeless population.

The property is located in North Natomas across from a gated community. On December 27, 2007, eviction notices were passed to people in the tent community by the city; they, however, are invalid since Leonard do not authorize their issuance of these notices. The reason that the homeless were being evicted off the Pacific Union Railroad property was that they were following city ordinances. The Sacramento City Code 12.52.030 states that it is illegal to camp on public or private property unless the property owner permits it. The company did not permit the homeless people to camp on the property; thus, the police had issued the eviction notices.

### **The Exclusion of Homeless People from Open Space**

Fredrick Law Olmstead believed that a natural landscape was open space that would provide a haven from the pollution of factories regardless of social standing. This belief led to the creation of one of America's greatest landmarks: Central Park. Fredrick's dream died with him the day that open space was opened only for the privileged.

In America Homeless people are not allowed in many open space areas. In Los Angeles, sprinklers go off at odd times of the night at parks to prevent homeless people from camping or sleeping on benches. This action was soon copied by business owners to prevent homeless people from sleeping close to store fronts (Davis, 2000).



**FIGURE C.4** Fortified dumpster

Another example is the design of garbage cans as shown in **FIGURE C.4**. In the article "The Fortress Los Angeles: Militarization of Urban Space" written by Mike Davis, Davis explains that restaurants in Phoenix, Arizona have built fortresses for the garbage cans:

"...in Phoenix a few years back, one popular seafood restaurant has spent \$12,000 to build the ultimate bag-lady-proof trash cage: three-quarter-inch steel rod with alloy locks and vicious out-turned spikes to safeguard moldering fishheads and stale French fries." This shows the lengths some people will go to keep homeless people out of open spaces. This is happening because many non-homeless people do not feel comfortable sharing a space with the homeless. The sight of homeless people scares away non-homeless people from entering businesses; hence, businesses and cities take drastic measures to keep homeless people out of public open spaces.

### **The Social Services Provided to the Homeless Population**

Social services are designed to help homeless people in a society where they are not wanted. The major social services provided are food and amenities, housing, and shelters.

The most widespread social service is food and amenities. These amenities include showers, beds, a library, etc.

Most nonprofit organizations that serve food and amenities are Christian faith-based organizations. An example of this is Friendship Park in Sacramento. Friendship Park is operated by a Christian-based organization called Loaves and Fishes. Between the hours of 9am-2pm, the park not only has a dining hall that provides breakfast and lunch, but it also has:

- Showers with soap and toiletries provided
- A health clinic
- Lockers to store belongings
- A library
- Free use of the telephone
- A mental health clinic that also has referrals
- A pet clinic
- Day labor referral services
- Social Services to help homeless people get housing
- Laundry

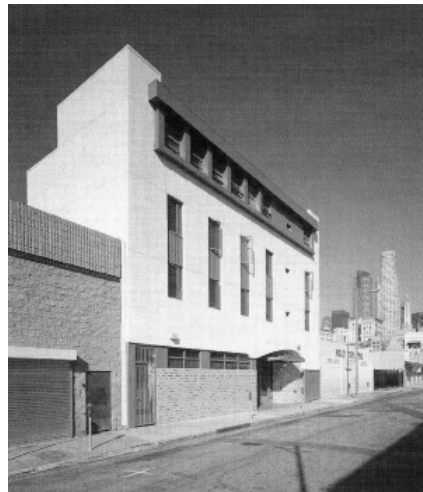
During these hours, many homeless people can restock their supplies before going back to the streets. These supplies include maxi pads for women or new eyeglasses and pills. Not only do the homeless replenish their supplies, but also replenish themselves as they relax in green open space without being bothered by police officers or business owners.

There are many different programs that help homeless people find affordable housing. One example is transitional housing. Transitional housing is temporary housing in which residents receive intensive job training and placement, child daycare, and health care for general and mental health (The City and County of San Francisco Human Service Agency). This type of housing is temporary – six months to two years – because residents will have finished the programs to become self-sufficient in the real world. The rent for transitional housing is cheap and affordable. The drawback of transitional housing or any affordable housing is that there is a waitlist and that the person applying for an apartment in transitional housing has to be sober for 30 days or longer.

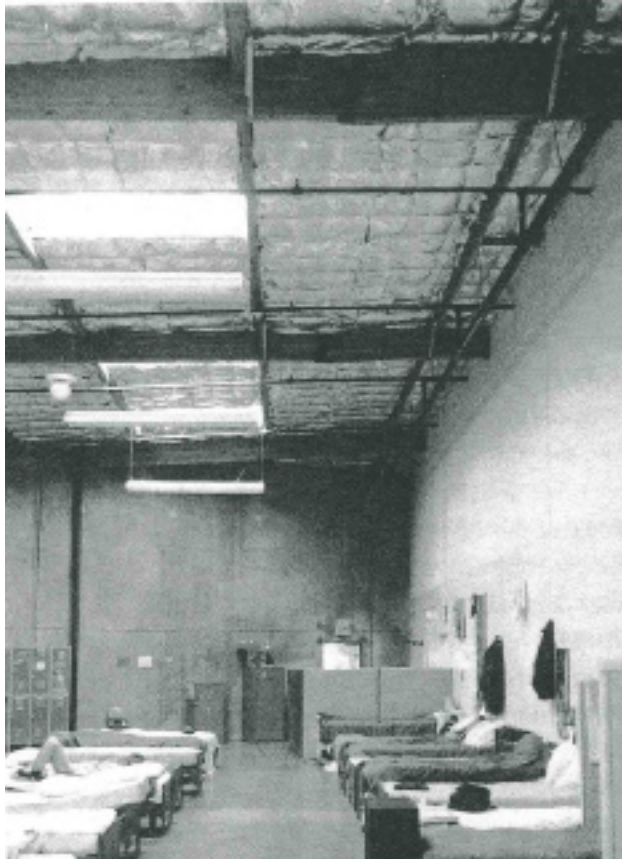
Another type of housing is public housing. Public housing is a low income program where families, the elderly, and disabled are allowed to live in housing at a cheap price. This program consists of the HUD Department providing federal funds to agencies in different cities that operate the low income housing. The drawback with the

program is that there is a waitlist and normally families, the elderly, and the disabled are the first to receive housing no matter where they are on the waitlist (The National Coalition for the Homeless, 2006).

The last type of housing is the SRO. SROs have been around since the 1900s. In the 1990s, the government needed to create more affordable housing. Section 8 was created to provide federal funding to rehabilitate the existing SROs. The units are similar to dormitories: For a small monthly fee, a person can have a bedroom while common areas and amenities such as bathrooms are shared among the residence (Davis, 2004) as shown in **FIGURE C.5**.



**FIGURE C.5** Boyd Hotel SRO in Los Angeles



**FIGURE C.6** Contra Costa County Shelter  
Shelters are one form of architecture that allow homeless people to rest for the night without being waitlisted. Shelters are large warehouse-type buildings. Within the buildings is a large room with beds squeezed inside. Shelters are equipped with bathroom facilities and staff. Shelters are a last resort for many homeless people because there are problems.

The problem with shelters is that there is no sense of privacy. The beds in shelters are placed right next to each other as shown in **FIGURE C.6**. This lack of privacy causes sleep deprivation because "...a light stays on at all times, but worse are the constant night sounds: 'There was always snoring, coughing, sneezing...'" (Davis, 2004). The lights are on in the shelters because the staff needs to watch the homeless if something were to happen.

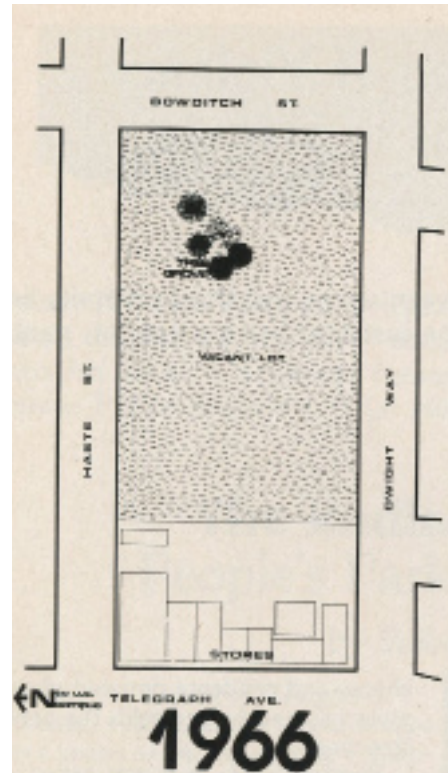
Another problem with shelters is the lack of safety. Not many people feel safe in homeless shelters because "...the ill, the elderly, and the young-were often victims of assault. Whatever they might have of value could be easily stolen. The abusive drunk or the mental ill might attack others without provocation (Davis, 2004)." People avoid the shelter because they share space with others who are mentally ill or with those who have violent tendencies. This type of environment is stressful because many homeless people fear for their safety.



People's Park is an example of how homeless and non-homeless people coexist in open space. People's Park is also located close to social services and public transportation, which making this an ideal place to stay for many homeless people. This case study will focus on the history, usefulness of the park to both homeless and non homeless people, and future plans for the park.

### History

People's Park has a unique history: the community has shaped the park through conflict with the property owner. In 1967, the University of California, Berkeley (Cal) purchased the land. There were two story bungalow-type housing at the time. Upon purchase, the houses were demolished and Cal made no plans for the vacant lot. However, residents and locals did have something planned: the vacant lot was to become a community park, which the people accomplished by aking over the park, breaking up the asphalt, and planting plants shown in **FIGURE P.2**:



**FIGURE P.1** Conceptual Plan of People's Park in 1966

Those who gathered ripped up concrete, hauled out stumps, filled in swampy puddles, and shoveled debris. They planted flowers, trees, and shrubs, and they laid sod. For days they worked side by side-old and young, merchants, students and residents-lending their muscle and their hearts to the creation of green, open space.

-Lowe, 2002

## CASE STUDY PEOPLE'S PARK



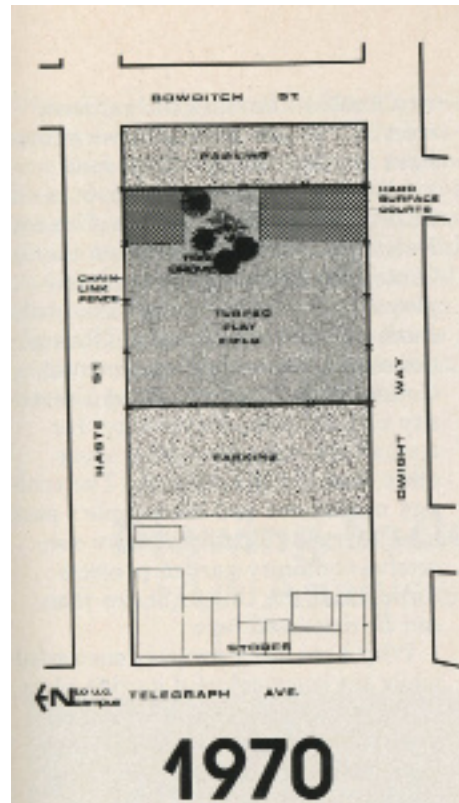
**FIGURE P.2** Plotted garden lots in the park



**FIGURE P.4** Fences torn down in May 1972

By April 20, 1969, the park was created.

People enjoyed the park until May 13, 1969 when the university ordered a fence to be built around the park to remind residents that the park is university property. Furthermore, the California Highway Patrol also stood



**FIGURE P.3** Conceptual Plan of People's Park in 1970

guard around the perimeter of the park (Sommers & Thayer, 1977).

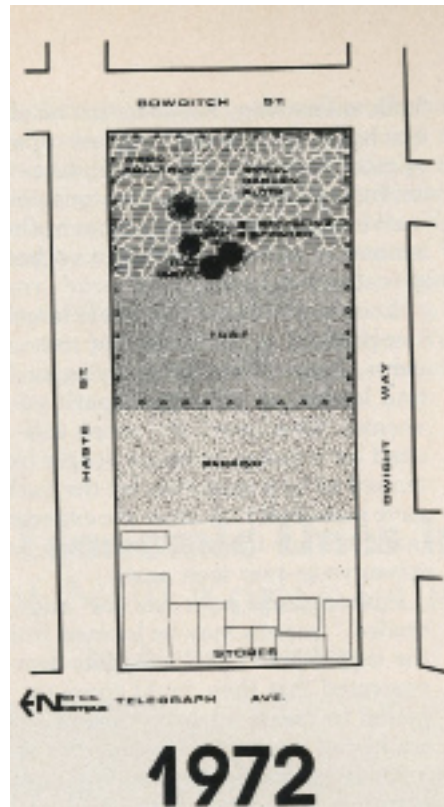
On May 15, 1969, a mob of protesters surround the park. A violent conflict resulted between the protestors and the police force. The High Way Patrol used guns and tear gas to subdue the residents and student protestors. This day was known as "Bloody Thursday" (Lowe 2002). The university gained



back the land afterwards. The park was paved over on the east and west ends of the park as seen in **FIGURE P.3**. The park was also fenced in. This victory did not last long.

On May 1972, the community charged the university's property and tore down the fence to reclaim the park as seen in **FIGURE P.4**. The community did this in response to the mining of Haiphong Harbor by US forces in Vietnam. Instead of stopping the residents and students, police officers helped remove the debris. Again, the community developed the park into the large green open space area as shown in **FIGURE P.5** (Sommers & Thayer, 1977).

The university installed volleyball courts in the park. However, people rallied and rioted in August 1991 as a response to the volleyball courts. The police intervened by firing wooden and rubber bullets and batons to stop the rallies (Chance, 2001). The courts were taken down in 1992 by the university.



**FIGURE P.5** Conceptual Plan of People's Park in 1972

Today, People's Park is still owned by the University of California, Berkeley. However, it remains as a large open space that the community enjoys. The elements of the park are shown in **FIGURE P.6**.



**FIGURE P.6** People's Park park element plan

The elements include:

1. Large lawn area: This is a multiuse open space where people can either sleep, picnic, play Frisbee, or gather when there are events. There is a large stage area where bands and other large events take place.
2. Basketball courts: used for recreational purposes by both students and the rest of the community.
3. Community gardens: contains plots of land in which different members of the community can garden and add to the aesthetics of the park. Also contains private benches for people to sit.
4. Park office: staffed with people who maintain the park. Duties range from taking care of the vegetation to lending out play equipment and board games. Sometimes, the staff would call in police officers to settle disputes.
5. Children's playground: consist of a tire swing and slide, no children use this area to play.

### Location

What makes People's Park successful for both homeless and non-homeless user groups is the location. People's Park is located on Haste Ave and Telegraph Ave. This area is a hub of business, has plenty of public transportation, and is surrounded by social services.

Telegraph Ave is one of the busiest streets in Berkeley. There are shops, restaurants, cafes, and street vendors. Telegraph provides both homeless and non-homeless people with opportunities to interact with each other as shown in **FIGURE P.7**.

The park is also located within walking distance to bus and Bart stations. Bart is located within walking distance from the park which allows people to travel easily without worrying about driving or finding parking. The public transportation system not only takes people to and from People's Park and Telegraph Ave. but all around Berkeley and through out the Bay Area.

The last reason that the location is successful are the social services available within the area. **FIGURE P.8** and **FIGURE P.9** are maps that show the locations of the social services in relation to the park.





**FIGURE P.7** Landuse map



# City of Berkeley Social Services

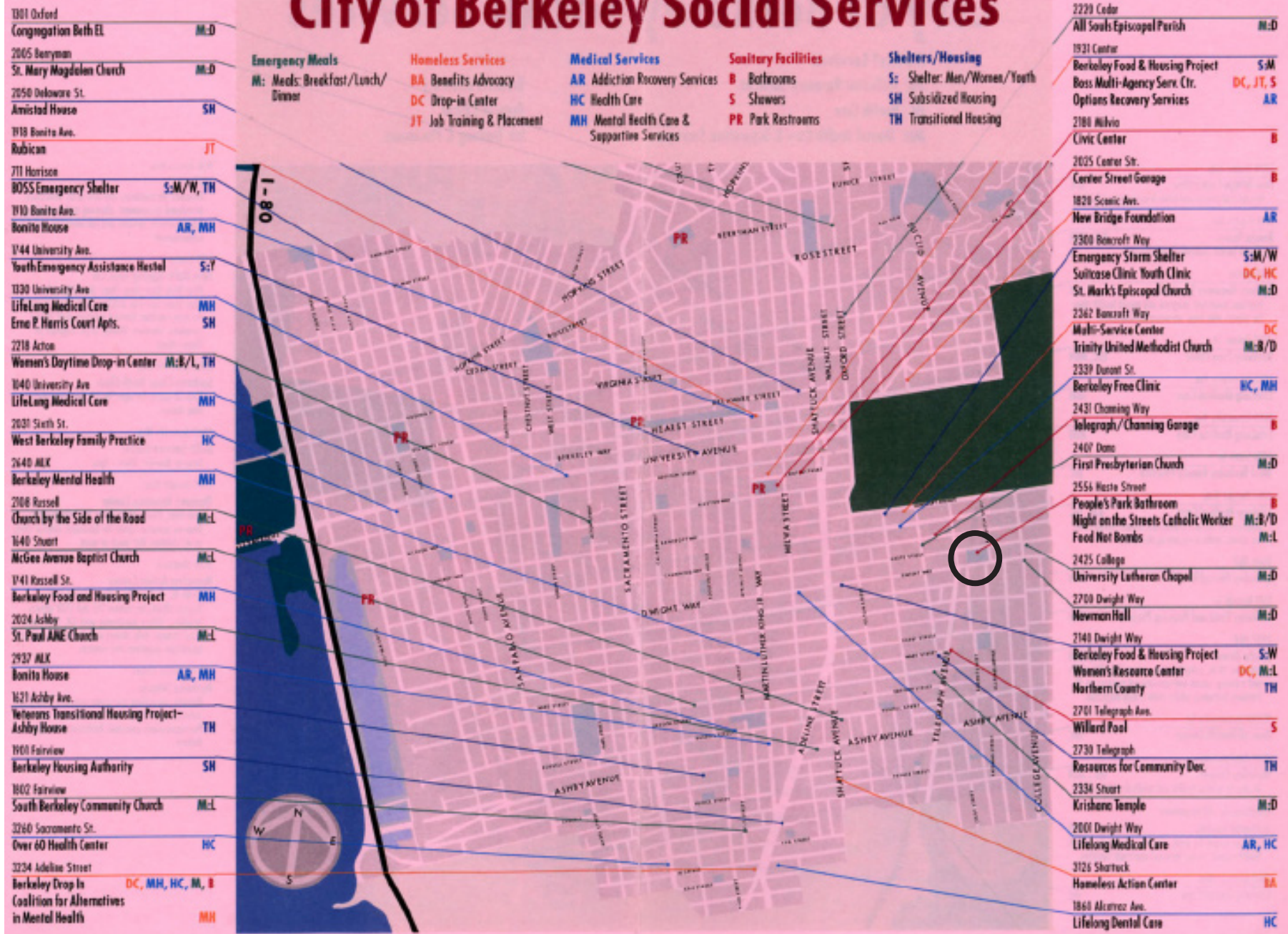


FIGURE P.8 Social Service map. The circled area is People's Park



# City of Berkeley Social Services

## Medical Services

- AR Addiction Recovery Services
- HC Health Care
- MH Mental Health Care & Supportive Services

## Homeless Services

- BA Benefits Advocacy
- DC Drop-in Center
- JT Job Training & Placement



FIGURE P.9 The back side of the Social Service map. The circled area is People's Park

## **Usefulness of the Park to both Homeless and Non Homeless User Groups**

These elements are used by both homeless and non-homeless people. This section is composed of site observations, questionnaires, and interviews. The method of gathering the information was a mix between informal interviews and site observations.

The site observation was conducted in one day. Notes were recorded on where and how different spaces in the park are used during the day as demonstrated in **Table CS.1**.

### **Site Observation Summary:**

- The most used area is the large lawn area. There were 78 people who used the lawn in the site observations. The uses ranged from normal activities such as sleeping and conversing to the most bizarre use: changing into women's underwear.
- The second most used area of the park is the basketball court. There were 22 users who used the space in the site observations. The basketball court is heavily used between the times to 2-6pm because university students are the ones who utilizes the space more. This is probably the time that many students are done with classes.

- There is a constant number of people using the area at the west end of the park. It is the same group of people who are camping under the vegetation.
- The time that the park was most heavily used was between the times of 4-5pm. There were 50 users in the park. This is due to the fact many people are resting after eating from the food brought by the Food not Bombs organization, also more students are finished with classes at the university at this time.

The interviews were conducted by asking people questionnaires. These questionnaires differed based on the social standing of the individual. The results of the answers to the questionnaires are summarized to give a consensus on how homeless and non-homeless populations use People's Park. The questionnaires are attached to the appendix of the report. The questionnaires were asked in an informal style of interview to get more input about the views and uses of the park by both user groups.



Time	Spaces used	Number of people	Notes
12-1 pm	Community gardens Large lawn area	6 10	-resting and talking with others. -6 teenagers underneath the eucalyptus tree -resting and sleeping
1-2pm	Basketball court  West end of the park  -Large lawn area	5  4  10	-One man reading by the park office. -4 homeless men playing with the basketball.  -People conversing and sleeping under the tree canopy.  - 6 people resting under the eucalyptus. - 4 people playing Frisbee
2-3pm	Large lawn area  Office  West end of the park	30  3  4	-Food not bombs set up and served free meals. -Many people waited in line to eat food. -Ate meals on the lawn and stage area.  -One person conversing with staff member. -man reading a book. -University officer patrolling close to the office.  -Same people conversing and sleeping under the tree canopy.
4-5 pm	Basketball court  Large lawn area  West end of the park  Office	9  35  4  2	-Students playing basketball.  -One man stretching in stage area. -28 people sleeping. -1 person talking on cell phone. -5 people sleeping -1 man changing into women's underwear (?)  -People are conversing at the camp.  -University officer watched over activities on lawn. Stopped the man from changing further into women's clothing.
			-1 man reading book. Shifted seating to avoid sunlight exposure.
5-6pm	Basketball court  Office  Large lawn area  West end of the park	8  5  5  4	- Students playing basketball.  - People are on a bench playing chess. -1 man reading a book. Shifted seat to avoid sun exposure.  -People are sleeping.  -Same people conversing and sleeping under the tree canopy.

**TABLE CS.1** People's Park observation table



## Homeless Questionnaire Results:

Transportation: Majority of users ride either the bus or their bikes to travel to People's Park because the Bart is too expensive.

Activities: Majority of users come to the park to relax and get food. The food comes in two sources: Food not Bombs and local donations. Food not Bombs only visits between the hours of 2-3pm everyday. The food is served close to the stage area where it is visible to many park users. Local donations are provided by the community. The food is usually dropped off from the Haste Ave street entrance to the park.

Social services: Majority of users use social services that are located all over Berkeley. The most popular services are dining halls, showers, and health care. These social services are also shown in a pamphlet shown in **FIGURES P.10 & P.11.**

Safety: Between a scale of 0-10, 0 represents the park being dangerous and 10 represents the park being safe, majority of users gave a rating of 7-8 because of "shady individuals". There is an existence of a homeless community in People's Park and they are very weary of people with shady character. Many of the interviewees claim that these characters are drug dealers and expressed that they did not want them in the park. Problems with the law: Many users say they have experienced problems from both university and city police officers. The most serious offense that a homeless person has committed is jaywalking. The overall experience interviewees have with the law is to be reminded not to trespass on

private property. However, not all experiences with the law are negative. One interviewee had nowhere to sleep at night, so the city police officers allowed him to sleep in the tennis courts.

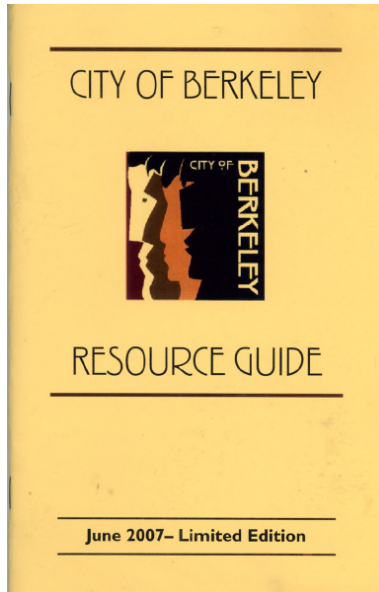
Changes: Many users want to change the ownership of the park from the university to the city because the city will not only allow the homeless people more access to the park but also incorporate programs that will help them. Another change is to keep drug dealers out of the park. Many homeless people come to the park to relax and avoid being reminded of things on the street. Having drug dealers and other characters would stress the users and make the park unsafe.

## Non-homeless Questionnaire Results:

Activities: Majority of the users defined work and relaxation. Since I interviewed on a Monday, there many users were not working at the park. Majority of the people I interviewed worked for the university or Food not Bombs. However, some users find the time to relax in the park.

Safety: Between the scale of 0-10, 0 represents the parking dangerous and 10 represents the park being safe, majority of users gave a rating of 10 and 7. Many users express that they feel very safe with the homeless user group in the park.

Changes: Many users want to get rid of people with undesirable characteristics. Similar with the homeless user group, many non-homeless users do not want drug dealers in the park. Also, some users want to change the ownership of the park from university to the city.



**FIGURE P.10** The cover of the social service pamphlet

**East Bay Community Recovery Project – Health Division**  
 2551 San Pablo Ave. ☎ 446-7120  
 Oakland, CA

HIV-HPC testing, counseling, MH, Case Management  
 ☎ M-Th. 8-5, F. 8-4:30 → Call \* FREE

**HIV Access – Berkeley Primary Access** ☎ 204-6514

**Berkeley, CA**  
 Medical, Case Management, MH, dental, nutrition, acupuncture, acupressure  
 ☎ M-F 9-5 → Call for appt. \* Insurance, free

**Peter Babcock House** ☎ 649-8500

1250 Addison, Suite G  
 Berkeley, CA  
 Supportive subsidized housing for people with HIV/AIDS.  
 ☎ M-Th 8:30-4:30 → Call to get on waiting list \* 30% of income

**Project Open Hand** ☎ 596-8200

3443 San Pablo Ave.  
 Oakland, CA  
 For systemic HIV and homebound critically ill under age of 60:  
 Groceries for systemic HIV; hot meals for homebound critically ill.  
 ☎ Groceries, M-F 10-2 • Office hrs, M-F 9-3:30 → Set up appt.  
 with caseworker (bring ID) \* FREE

**Regent House** Have caseworker refer ☎ 845-6882

**Berkeley, CA**  
 Supportive housing for people with HIV/AIDS.  
 ☎ M-F 10-5 → 30% of income (GA not acceptable)

**HEALTH**  
 Medical — General

**Advice Nurse – City of Berkeley** ☎ 981-5300

1947 Center St., 3rd floor  
 Berkeley, CA  
 General medical advice, health related information & referral.  
 ☎ M-F 8-12, 1-5 → Call \* FREE

**Berkeley Free Clinic** ☎ 548-4811

2339 Durant Ave.  
 Berkeley, CA  
 Anonymous HIV, STD testing  
 ☎ Su. 5-7 pm (Sa. 12-2 women only) Volunteer phone hrs, M-F 3-9pm,  
 Sa. 9-9, (closed 1-2), Su. 4-7 → Drop-in

19

**Berkeley Health Center for Women and Men** ☎ 843-6194

2908 Ellsworth St.  
 Berkeley, CA  
 Comprehensive primary care for people over 18 yrs. of age.  
 ☎ M-F 8-12 & 1-5 • W 9-6:30 → Call for appt. \* MediCal, Medi-  
 care, sliding scale

**Berkeley Primary Care** ☎ 204-4666

2001 Dwight Way (Alta Bates)  
 Berkeley, CA  
 General medical: adult, women, prenatal, psychosocial, confiden-  
 tial HIV/AIDS testing, acupuncture detox.  
 MediCal, Medicare, private insurance, sliding scale, payment  
 plans ☎ M-F 8:30-5 → Call

**Health Care for the Homeless** ☎ 532-1930

1900 Fruitvale Ave., Ste. 3E  
 Oakland, CA  
 Mobile Aid Clinic, Case Management, medical transport, TB test-  
 ing-prevention-treatment  
 ☎ M-F 9-5 → Call for referral M W F between 9:30 and noon \*  
 FREE - MediCal, Medicare accepted.

**Lifelong Clinic (TLC), The** ☎ 204-4666

2001 Dwight Way (Alta Bates)  
 Berkeley, CA  
 Medical services for uninsured people: urgent, MH, confidential  
 HIV testing (Bring medications and ID to first appt.).  
 ☎ Call 704-5010 for appt. and drop-in hours \* Donation

**Native American Health Center** ☎ 535-4460

3124 International Blvd  
 Oakland, CA  
 Medical, dental, MH, homeless youth, WIC programs available,  
 nutrition, fitness  
 ☎ M-F 8:30-5 → Call for appt. \* MediCal, Medicare, insurance,  
 sliding scale

**Planned Parenthood Golden Gate**

482 W. MacArthur ☎ 800-967-7526  
 Oakland, CA  
 2970 Hilltop Mall Dr., Suite 307 ☎ 222-5290  
 Richmond, CA  
 Information & referral, OBGYN services, pregnancy testing, family  
 planning, birth control, abortion, anonymous HIV testing  
 ☎ M-F 9-5; Sa. 9-12 → Call for appt. \* Sliding scale

20

**FIGURE P.11** Inside the pamphlet, services are listed with address, phone number, and hours

Summary of Questionnaire Results:  
 What both user groups agree on is that they do not want drug dealers and other shady characters in the park. They feel that these people will threaten the safety and harmony of the park. Also, both user groups express how much they appreciate the amount of vegetation that is in the park. This shows that both homeless and non-homeless people have the same needs and concerns.

The interviews were conducted as informal interviews. The information was not recorded by any digital means because many of the interviewees were not comfortable with being recorded. Instead, the information is paraphrased and then reconstructed to fit the social situations. The information in this section will provide insight into People’s Park and Berkeley’s public housing system.

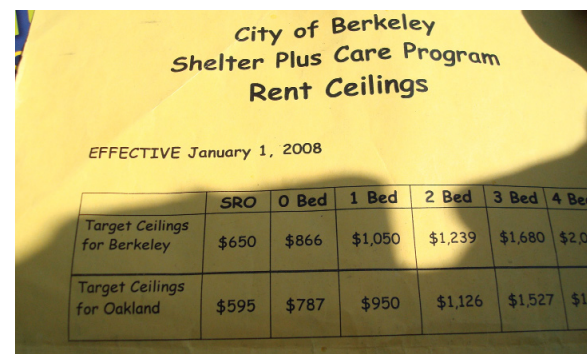
## Katie

Katie is a college student working as a People's Park staff member. She gave me insight on her job as well as how People's Park operates. No one is allowed to leave food for people on the stage unless the food is brought by an organization. Katie explains that people will leave molded food or molded clothes for the homeless users. This poses a health hazard to the users in the park.

Another item is the removal of the free box. The free box is a large wooden box where the community can donate items for the homeless population to use. Due to fights over the clothing in the box and the vandalism, the university removed the free box. Katie explains that the university has tried different ways of protecting the free box, including changing the material of the box from wooden to metal. However, this didn't stop vandalism such as setting the box on fire from happening. The article entitled "Cal moves to get rid of the 'free box'" explains that free box did leave because of the fights people would start over the donations (Nevius, 2006).

## Ronald Sykes

Ronald Sykes is a senior citizen waitlisted for public housing under the Section 8 Housing Voucher; this is a piece of legislation that pays for 30% of the rent for public housing (Rental housing online, 2005). Mr. Sykes is placed on top of the wait list because he is over the age of 62 and is disabled. His disability is a congested heart failure of Class IV. Even though Mr. Sykes may be on the top of the waitlist, he has not received housing. Mr. Sykes can not find an affordable place to live in Berkeley that is close to his doctors. The most affordable place is above \$800 as shown in **FIGURE P.12**. Mr. Sykes explains that even with the Section 8 Voucher, he could not afford the rent. The prices in Oakland and Richmond for public housing are cheaper than in Berkeley, however safety is a concern to Mr. Sykes.



City of Berkeley  
Shelter Plus Care Program  
Rent Ceilings

EFFECTIVE January 1, 2008

	SRO	0 Bed	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed
Target Ceilings for Berkeley	\$650	\$866	\$1,050	\$1,239	\$1,680	\$2,080
Target Ceilings for Oakland	\$595	\$787	\$950	\$1,126	\$1,527	\$1,850

**FIGURE P.12** List of available housing

Mr. Sykes also has shared the information that the City of Berkeley is trying to regain federal funding for Section 8. A while ago, the government refused to give Section 8 funds to the city because of fraudulent retrofits. Mr. Sykes' insight refers to one of the many mistakes the Public Housing Agency in Berkeley has made. In an article entitled "Housing Authority shows improvement, federal official says", the city of Berkeley was accused of many offenses and not following the HUD regulations such as paying section 8 landlords even after tenants have died. The Public Housing Agency was also blamed for leasing large apartments to single people instead of low income families (Jones, 2007).

### **Future plans**

Over the years, the university has tried to develop plans for the park but the community has rejected the plans. In 2007, Cal hired MKThink – an architecture firm from San Francisco – to create planning solutions for People's Park. This section will look at who the conceptual designs are targeting and what park elements are removed from the site.

### *Targeted User Group*

The conceptual plans do not focus their designs on the community but the university students. This is achieved by increasing the flow of pedestrian circulation and creating more open space.

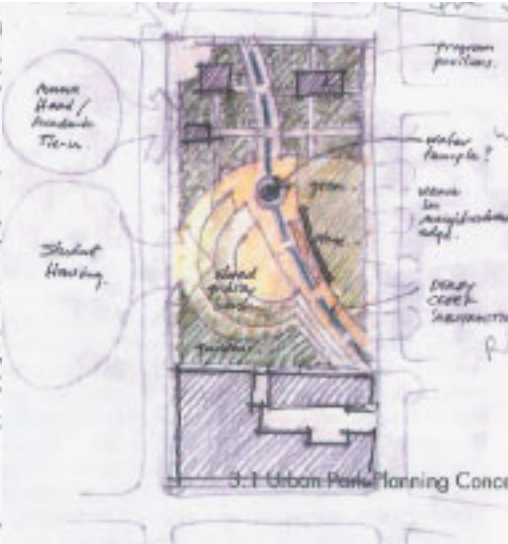
In order to accommodate for the students' schedules, the firm proposes more pedestrian pathways through the park. In the "Student and Community Center" conceptual design, there is a pedestrian path located behind the stage and shrubs. Another pathway is placed between business buildings as shown in **FIGURE P.13**. By adding more pathways, MKThink believes this would allow students easy access to both the businesses and the campus (MKThink, 2007). This concept is a problem because the pathway that connects to Telegraph is located on an existing business.

Another way MKThink is targeting the students is by creating more open space for social and academic uses. In the "Urban Park" conceptual plan, the large lawn is sloped to face a flat stage. This stage would serve for performances at large events as shown in **FIGURE P.14**.



**FIGURE P.13** Student and Community Conceptual Plan

The design also has pavilions at the west end of the park to invite students from the dorms. The pavilions would be used for "...activity, art installations and performances" (MKThink, 2007). The problem with this concept is that the basketball courts are the most utilized area by students. The basketball courts are only used during certain times of day depending on the day of the week and class schedules. The plan has taken out the basketball court and tries to instill new uses for the park.



**FIGURE P.14** Urban Park Conceptual Plan

### *Removal of park elements*

The other problem with MKThink's conceptual designs are the removal of certain elements of the park that are used by the community. In addition to the basketball court, MKThink has removed the community gardens, park office, and almost half the number of trees in the park.

The community gardens are used by the homeless population. It has several personal and private spaces that many homeless people use. The heavy vegetation – whether it is maintained or natural – provides a screen to give homeless users the privacy they need



to sleep, eat, etc. The seating in these spaces are spread apart to give users their privacy. Removal of the community gardens would take away the only personal space that many users enjoy.

Another park element that is removed is the office. Not only does the office loan play equipment and board games to users, but it also acts as a sort of law enforcement for the park. The duties of the park staff range from ensuring that users of the park are safe from threats expired food products to preventing altercations. The park staff also make People's Park more welcoming to homeless user groups when other public open spaces are not.

The last park element is the reduction of the number of trees in the park. Many users express that the trees provide a sense of nature that is rarely seen in an urban center like Berkeley. If the trees were removed from the park, there will not only be less shade, but People's Park will look like someone's front yard.

Based on the information from the People's Park case study and research on the history of homelessness and the conditions that homeless people must live in, I have created guidelines on both the planning and the design level.

### **Planning Guidelines**

In order for us to help the homeless population, there are some planning guidelines that must be implemented in order to give the homeless the programs and services they need.

1. *Revise Zoning Codes* : Zoning codes are designed to protect residential areas from businesses by prohibiting them from developing there. They dictate where businesses and other land uses can be developed. Zoning codes also prevent social services from establishing themselves in different areas. This prevents homeless people from getting the services they need. If zoning codes become more lax towards social services such as transitional housing and community mental health centers. Then social services can be established in areas

that homeless people can feel comfortable to come to and or are is easy to commute to.

2. *Constantly update the size and demographics of the homeless population within the city*: The direction the economy is taking, the homeless population grows every year. This means that there will not be enough services and housing to accommodate the growing population of homeless people. Every year the city must update the size of the population in order to provide the proper amount of services to those who need it.
3. *Build campgrounds*: During my field study, many homeless people express that their favorite place was a park or anything that resembled nature in a city. Campgrounds should be incorporated into the city. The campgrounds will provide a place for homeless people to sleep for the night; it will also provide them a temporary living space while they wait to be placed in an apartment.

4. *Install Social Services Office in campgrounds and parks:* Placing services in landscapes occupied by homeless people can help them find programs they need. Social Services can also help homeless people file the paperwork they need for housing and other programs. The offices would help expedite the paper work process, so that not many homeless people have to wait long to be housed. The offices can also have amenities that homeless people need such as a refrigerator. During my interview with Mr. Sykes, he expressed that his heart medicine needs to be refrigerated; however he has no access to one.

### **Design Guidelines**

In the field of designers, homelessness is rarely addressed in a conceptual plan. The plans only have designs that are targeted towards non-homeless user groups. These are some guidelines that designers can use to accommodate both homeless and non-homeless user groups:



**FIGURE G.1** Potential campgrounds in urban areas



**FIGURE G.2** Large open areas can act as a place for large events like fairs



1. *Incorporate plenty of vegetation:* In the MKThink plan for People’s Park, the firm used very little vegetation – especially tree vegetation – in the conceptual plans. Trees provide shade and aesthetics that both homeless and non-homeless users groups can appreciate in urban areas.

2. *Large open space:* Large open space should consist of a large lawn area and a stage. The stage can either be a platform or a paved area. The large open space can serve small group functions like picnics; it can also be used for large community events such as a fair as shown in **FIGURE G.2**. This would allow homeless and non-homeless user groups to interact with one another.

3. *Compost bins:* Since a large amount of people will be using the landscape, there will be a large quantity of waste to dispose of. Compost bins can help reduce the amount of waste in a park. The compost can be free for the community to use in their gardens. The compost can also be used to

fertilize the vegetation in other parks. This renewable source of nutrition can save the city money in purchasing fertilizer and disposing of waste. It would also help reduce the amount of chemicals that would reach the storm drains.



**FIGURE G.3** Compost



**FIGURE G.4** Wooden compost bin

With these guidelines, homeless people can finally use public open space as well as receive services that they need. In order for these guidelines to be fully implemented, many changes need to happen. We must change our perceptions on homeless people. Once our perceptions change, major changes can happen such as changing public policy on homelessness and increasing government funding. In turn, homeless people would not only be able to have homes and have adequate health care, but they would have the same treatment and rights as any human being.

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## CONCLUSION

Homeless usergroup survey

Non-homeless usergroup survey

1. How did you hear about People’s Park?

1. What activities do you do in People’s Park?

2. What mode of transportation do you use to get to People’s Park? Explain.

2. On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the most safe and 1 being unsafe, how would you rate the safety of People’s Park? Explain.

3. What activities do you do in People’s Park?

3. If there was anything you would change about People’s park, what would it be?

4. Are you aware of the social services that are around People’s park? If so, which services do you use?

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the most safe and 1 being unsafe, how would you rate the safety of People’s Park? Explain.

6. If there was anything you would change about People’s park, what would it be?

**APPENDIX**

H.1 The number of inpatients through out the years	<a href="http://www.pbs.org">www.pbs.org</a>
H.2 The number of subsidized housing over the years	<a href="http://www.bringlahome.com">www.bringlahome.com</a>
H.3 Hud Budget Authority and the Mckinney Homeless Assistance Act	<a href="http://www.bringlahome.com">www.bringlahome.com</a>
C.1 Ethnicity composition of the homeless population	<a href="http://www.nationalhomeless.com">www.nationalhomeless.com</a>
C.2 Gender population chart of the the homeless population	
C.3 Mentally Ill population in the homeless population	
C.4 Fortified dumpster	Davis, M.
C.5 Boyd Hotel SRO in Los Angeles	Davis, S.
C.6 Contra Costa homeless shelter	
P.1 Conceptual plan of People's Park in 1966	Sommers, R. & Thayer, R.
P.2 Plotted lots in the park	
P.3 Fences torn down in May 1972	
P.4 Conceptual Plan of People's Park in 1970	
P.5 Conceptual Plan of People's Park in 1972	
P.8 The social service map. The circle area is People's Park	City of Berkeley
P.9 The back of the social service map. The circle area is People's Park.	
P.10 The cover of the social service phamplet	
P.11 The inside of the social service phamplet	
P.12 List of available housing	
P.13 Student and Community conceptual plan	MKThink
P.14 Urban park conceptual plan	
G.1 Potential campgrounds in urban areas	<a href="http://www.travel-vancouver-island.com">www.travel-vancouver-island.com</a>
G.2 Large open space can act as a place for large events like faires	<a href="http://www.pe.com">www.pe.com</a>
G.3 Compost	<a href="http://www.cambridgema.gov">www.cambridgema.gov</a>
G.4 Wooden compost bin	<a href="http://www.monsterguide.net">www.monsterguide.net</a>

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