Homelessness - The Transit Challenge

Metro Transit Police Homeless Outreach
Lieutenant Mario Ruberto
Problem Oriented Policing Project
Connection between Chronic Health Conditions and Homelessness

The Cost of the Endless Cycle

- Emergency Room
- Jail
- Detox
- Transit

2015: 1,273 Police Calls
2018: 2,770
Cost of Mistreatment of Homeless

- Fresno
  - $2.35 million class-action settlement

- Honolulu
  - Police sued over trespass statute
  - Ruled too broad
“Bermuda Triangle”
Twin Cities’ Largest Homeless Camp
Working Toward Solutions
Metro Transit Police Department
Homeless Action Team (HAT)

- Best practices research
- Addressing:
  - Customer service complaints
  - Community concerns about health and safety
- Shifts—overnight when shelters close through morning rush
HAT Training Topics

- Crisis Intervention and De-escalation
- Outreach Worker Certification
- HMIS Assessor Training
- Trauma-Informed Interviewing
- Understanding Addiction
- Building Community Trust
HAT Next Steps

- Hiring case workers vs. street outreach workers
- College internship program
- Review & strengthen our Code of Conduct policies
- Examine the unintended use of the all-day pass
- Create education plan for employees and riders
Managing Resources

- Awarded 89 HUD housing vouchers
- Assist homeless persons with disabilities using transit as shelter
- Winter “Safe Space” shelter
- Designate one Point Person to coordinate efforts and update service partners weekly
- Develop a registry of homeless using transit as a shelter
- Eliminate duplication of efforts
- Pre & Post-move housing stability counseling
Houston Homeless Outreach Team

- Shepherds in Blue
- IBIS ID System
Improving Outreach Solutions

- Overnight drop-in shelters
- Manage unintended incentives
Ongoing Challenge
Thank you!