

There are few issues that Public Policy has had more problems with than Homelessness. Having been a health care provider and a Ranger for multiple public land areas, this has been and continues to be the most significant social issue anywhere. My personal experience is I had a family and have been homeless for a short period of time. I have dealt with families that have camped along a busy roadside in a National Forest and other public land, without any basic necessities or support. I have dealt with the homeless on the street and in their camps in cities in Washington and Colorado. I have also been exposed to people being homeless from a natural disaster and as refugees in a war zone.

There are multiple facets to the problem, the extreme cost of housing is the biggest problem. Where I lived in Colorado there is a true joke, you have 3 houses or 3 jobs to live there. The working poor with families are most affected. There are other, especially mental health and drug issues, but they are outside the scope of this paper.

Housing was never a problem when it was seen as a necessity to all in the community. A free market was open and there was a balance of wages and cost of living. But that all changed due to public policy-the government and trickle down economics. Over and Over the people in power kept raving about how trickle down economics was good for everyone. Time and study has shown it has not. It has left a gap in the middle especially where the middle class is left out.

So now a home isn't just a place to live, it's an investment portfolio. It's a means to make money. Whether as a owner when he sells it, to make money. As a rental property, to make money. Or as a commercial investment loan, so banks can make money. And for all these, the more money the better. The family of 4 with both parents working can't keep up to this pressure on their financials with a

basic low wage job.

There are several ways to address this problem, but I am addressing 2. First, public education and skills training. I have been looking at job posting for a while now and notice that there is a lot of demand for people with just a little bit of skills but who have credentials and license to pick up very good paying jobs with an opportunity to advance in education and training to higher levels. I am speaking specifically in medical field. A basic CNA program is a couple of weeks, an EMT program is 80 hrs, a home health provider is somewhere around that. These jobs are in high demand and paying about \$25 / hr.

Construction is the same, they need people that can do plumbing and electrical, that can do more then just the heavy labor, and these jobs are learn as you go in many cases with some structured training interspersed.

These are just 2 examples. There are many more. The problem for this to work is that you have to recruit, find people willing to do the job. But then you need to provide support while they are in training. You can't support a family if your sitting in a class not getting paid. This is where employers and community come in. A company could hire a person and pay for their training, maybe pay them part or all of an expected wage while in class. Then they go right to the employer and start working. The community or government could assist in paying while the person is in school and assist in other ways.

The second part is to address the housing issue. The free market works for some but not all when it comes to housing. There are a lot of possibilities, but the unique one include school districts that build apartments for their staff. The old company towns where everyone worked and lived and shopped in

company run stores. The rent controlled or section 8 housing. These are all good especially for short term, but it comes down to its not theirs. They can not own a home, they can not become a part of a community or have a vested interest when all they can do is rent. We do need to fix the short term housing issue, absolutely. But we need to address home ownership too.

I am speaking from my experience, the majority of homeless that don't have housing or the resources to use are single, most males. For what ever reason, they find themselves homeless. For, these who are able to function in society and be a contributor, a tiny home. Something in the range of 144 square foot, with basic utilities. Sounds simple and very plausible from a technology and building point of view, but not from an administrative one. I have found the building code, variances, land use, and other governmental regulations totally counter productive to building anything other than a single story 4 bedroom home. Very few municipalities are allowing in any way or form a tiny home, let alone a community of them. For that matter, a park for extended stay Recreational Vehicles are few and far between. They have the same issues as tiny homes.

Families with children do not have to go homeless, there are opportunities to help in short term. We need to address how to fix the short term issue with affordable housing thru grants and special programs to assist.