EVALUATION OF THE
Homeless Outreach
SERVICE TEAM
(HOST) PROGRAM

Erin B. Worwood, MCJ ■ Jessica Seawright, BSW ■ Robert P. Butters, PhD

COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

SLCPD
Serving with Integrity

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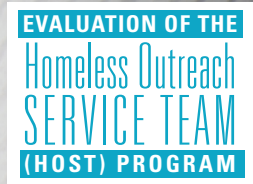
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Background and Introduction

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 610,042 people were homeless in the United States on a single night in January 2013 (HUD 2013). In Utah, state officials estimate that 15,093 individuals were homeless in January 2013, a 9.5 percent decrease from the previous year (Wrathall et al. 2013). When individuals experiencing homelessness lack the resources to gain adequate housing and key behavioral and support systems, they occupy public places that often create conflict with other community members. Communities may perceive homeless individuals to be a threat to community safety or a disruption to the functioning of businesses and public spaces. As a result, many communities have turned to their local law enforcement agencies and criminal justice systems to address these issues (NCH and NLCHP 2006).

Law enforcement policies typically respond to such problems by restricting where homeless individuals can congregate and issuing citations for misdemeanor offenses and infractions that are specific to their status as homeless (e.g., public intoxication, urination in public, open container, trespassing, jaywalking) (American Bar Association 2006; U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness 2012; NCH and NLCHP 2006). The homeless gain entry into the criminal justice system when they are cited for misdemeanor offenses or infractions, fail to appear in court, or are booked into the jail on a court-ordered warrant (J. Baxter, pers. comm., September 10, 2012). Unfortunately, reliance on the criminal justice system as a means of managing homeless populations places an expensive burden on a system that is not equipped to address the underlying issues contributing to homelessness (Roman and Travis 2004). Salt Lake City's Homeless Outreach Service Team (HOST) program was developed in April 2011 as a collaborative effort between law enforcement and homeless service providers to disrupt this cycle and address the underlying issues of homelessness (M. Ross, pers. comm., October 2, 2012).

The original purpose of the HOST program was to bring Salt Lake City (Utah) police officers and community outreach workers together to identify homeless individuals who frequently panhandle or engage in other types of public nuisance activities in downtown Salt Lake City and to connect them to community resources. The main objectives of this program were to (1) encourage police to make referrals to services rather than issue citations to the homeless and (2) decrease the prevalence of panhandling by encouraging the public to give money to homeless service providers rather than directly to panhandlers. In 2012, the Salt Lake City (Utah) Police Department (SLCPD) received an award from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) to expand the HOST program. The goals of the COPS Office HOST award were to fund a public awareness campaign, coordinate strategic planning efforts, and recruit and train formerly homeless individuals as volunteers to assist with outreach efforts. Salt Lake City has contracted with the Utah Criminal Justice Center (UCJC) to examine the impact of the award on services offered and the perceptions, roles, and responsibilities of personnel and key stakeholders involved with the HOST program. This report covers the three primary components of the HOST program: donations to homeless service providers, the homeless support group, and collaborative street outreach.

Donations to Homeless Service Providers

One component of the HOST program is the collection of donations for homeless service providers through Red Meters (decommissioned city parking meters painted red, marked with HOST logos and explanations, and repurposed to accept donations). The purpose of the Red Meters is two-fold: to raise awareness of panhandlers in downtown Salt Lake City and to encourage the public to donate to homeless service providers through the Red Meters instead of giving money to panhandlers (Udseth 2012). According to the Salt Lake City Downtown Alliance (2013), which has partnered with the Salt Lake City Police Department (SLCPD) on the HOST program,

> When people approach you to ask for money, sometimes they really need help. But in most cases, they are not homeless. Many panhandlers use the money you give them to fuel addictions and other self-destructive behaviors. Even small donations can help to create significant programs to help people in need.

Red Meters have been installed in downtown locations that experience high levels of panhandling and locations correspond with sponsor business locations. Between May 2011 and July 2013, a total of $20,500.96 was donated to the HOST program through business and community partner sponsorship.[1] Zions Bank has matched these donations, resulting in approximately $40,000 donated to community homeless service providers. In a recent *Salt Lake Tribune* article, Salt Lake City Police Chief Chris Burbank was quoted as saying,:

> When you give to HOST, the money goes to partners who work day in, day out, to provide meaningful services to our homeless population. Our hope is the public will understand that money given to the HOST program does much more to end homelessness than giving to individual panhandlers. (Mims 2013)

The redirection of donations away from individual panhandlers and toward homeless service providers (e.g., The Road Home and Fourth Street Clinic) is part of a larger initiative to end panhandling in Utah.

Methods

Beginning in June 2013, an advertising campaign was launched to increase public awareness of the HOST Red Meter program. Advertising was displayed intermittently through the summer of 2013 and was focused on areas of public transportation in Salt Lake's downtown area (e.g., on the sides of buses, inside TRAX train cars). To examine the impact of the advertising campaign on knowledge and use of the Red Meters, UCJC conducted public polling at two separate points in time: prior to the advertising campaign ("pre") and during the campaign ("post"). Polling was completed in heavily trafficked downtown Salt Lake City areas that were within close proximity to at least one Red Meter.

Students from the University of Utah graduate social work program were recruited to conduct public polling. As an incentive, students received participation points in class for assisting with the project. Students were trained on-site to complete the polling and grouped into pairs

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1. Red Meter sponsors include American West Bank, Gastronomy, GSBS Architects, Ray Quinney and Nebeker P.C., Red Iguana, Squatters Pubs, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, the Jeff Stokes Family, Utah Jazz, Salt Lake City, and Zions Bank.

or trios and conducted polls in one-hour increments. Twenty students assisted the researchers with the pre-campaign polling exercise and another 18 assisted during the post-campaign session.

Students were given a script (see appendix D on page 34), data collection tool (see appendix G on page 37), a map of the downtown area with the sites of the Red Meters designated (see appendix F on page 36), and cards with meter locations and the HOST website to hand out to interested respondents. All students wore name tags, which identified them as student researchers with the UCJC and University of Utah. UCJC researchers were available to provide any needed assistance.

Polling was conducted during two three-hour sessions, including a weekday afternoon (11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.) and a weekend evening (5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.) during both the pre- and post-campaign time periods. This schedule intended to capture responses from populations who work downtown as well as those who are visiting downtown for recreation.

Data entry was completed by graduate students who were unable to participate in the polling exercise. Students were paired, with each student responsible for entering data from paper forms into an Excel spreadsheet as well as checking their partner's data for entry errors (pre-campaign, four teams of two students; post-campaign, three teams of two). Data was collected from students by a UCJC researcher and merged into a single SPSS 21.0® file for data analysis. As this study was primarily descriptive, response frequencies are the main statistics reported. In addition to analyzing responses for respondents as a whole, comparison analyses were conducted based on frequency of time spent in the area and familiarity with the Red Meters.

It is important to note that although the pre- and post-campaign polling exercises were conducted using the same procedures, these groups are composed of different people. Because the two groups were unmatched, much larger sample sizes than are present in this data would be required in order to make pre/post comparisons and conduct tests of statistical significance. As a result, it is unclear whether differences in scores are representative of a change that occurred as a result of the advertising campaign or merely a pre-existing difference between the two groups.

Results

A total of 715 individuals participated in the public polling exercise: 480 prior to the advertising campaign and 235 during the campaign (see table 1 on page 5). More than half of the polls were conducted in the afternoon (51 percent) and nearly two-thirds (63 percent) were conducted in the area surrounding the Gallivan Center and City Creek shopping center. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they are frequently (at least once per week), occasionally (less than once per week but more than once per month), or rarely (less than once per month) in downtown Salt Lake City. Seventy-one (71) percent of pre-campaign respondents indicated they were "frequently" in the downtown Salt Lake City area, compared to just more than half (52 percent) of post-campaign respondents. Approximately one-quarter (24 percent) of all polls conducted during the two time periods were conducted with individuals who reported they are "rarely" in the downtown area.

Table 1a. Location and respondent characteristics by location

Location	Pre n (%)	Post n (%)	Combined n (%)
Gallivan Center / City Creek Shopping Center	213 (44)	235 (100)	448 (63)
Gateway / EnergySolutions Arena	75 (16)	—	75 (11)
Pioneer Park	47 (10)	—	47 (7)
Unspecified downtown area	145 (30)	—	145 (20)
Total	480	235	715

Table 1b. Location and respondent characteristics by time of day

Time of day	Pre n (%)	Post n (%)	Combined n (%)
Afternoon	260 (54)	102 (43)	362 (51)
Evening	75 (16)	133 (57)	208 (29)
Missing	145 (30)	—	145 (20)
Total	480	235	715

Table 1c. Location and respondent characteristics by time spent in downtown area

Time spent in downtown area	Pre n (%)	Post n (%)	Combined n (%)
Rarely	98 (20)	71 (30)	169 (24)
Occasionally	35 (7)	37 (16)	72 (10)
Frequently	339 (71)	121 (52)	460 (64)
Missing	8 (2)	6 (3)	14 (2)
Total	480	235	715

One-fifth of respondents (142, 20 percent) reported ever noticing the Red Meters (see table 2) and far fewer (3 percent of the total sample) reported ever putting money in them. Although few respondents reported donating to the meters, nearly half (45 percent) reported giving money directly to homeless people or homeless service providers (or both). Two-thirds (98, 69 percent) of respondents who reported noticing the meters also indicated that they knew what the meters were for. A similar percentage of respondents reported familiarity with the Red Meters during the pre- and post-campaign time periods.

Table 2a. Donating habits and awareness of Red Meters among all respondents

	Pre n (%)	Post n (%)	Combined n (%)
Regularly give money to homeless people or service providers	206 (43)	118 (51)	324 (45)
Have noticed HOST Red Meters	90 (19)	52 (22)	142 (20)
Total	480	235	715

Table 2b. Familiarity with Red Meters among respondents who were aware of them

	Pre n (%)	Post n (%)	Combined n (%)
Have noticed Red Meters and know what they are for	62 (69)	36 (69)	98 (69)
Have put money in Red Meters	12 (13)	8 (15)	20 (14)
Total who have noticed Red Meters	90	52	142

Table 3 also examined respondent familiarity with the meters, but separated the results by the amount of time that people reported spending in the downtown area. When compared to respondents who were "rarely" or "occasionally" downtown, more of the respondents who were frequently in the downtown area reported noticing the Red Meters.

Table 3a. Donating habits and awareness of Red Meters by respondents' time spent in downtown area

	Rarely n (%)	Occasionally n (%)	Frequently n (%)
Regularly give money to homeless people or service providers	69 (41)	35 (49)	217 (47)
Have noticed HOST Red Meters	6 (4)	13 (18)	120 (26)
Total*	169	72	460

* Total does not include the 14 respondents who did not indicate how often they are in downtown Salt Lake City

Table 3b. Familiarity with Red Meters among respondents who were aware of them by respondents' time spent in downtown area

	Rarely n (%)	Occasionally n (%)	Frequently n (%)
Have noticed Red Meters and know what they are for	2 (33)	5 (38)	93 (78)
Have put money in Red Meters	0 (0)	0 (0)	21 (18)
Total who have noticed Red Meters	6	13	120

As shown in figure 1 on page 7, when respondents who were frequently downtown were examined by time period, the post-campaign group had a larger percentage of respondents who reported noticing the Red Meters compared to the pre-campaign group. The post group also had a larger percentage of respondents who reported knowledge of the purpose of the Red Meters than the pre group. The post group also had a higher percentage of respondents who reported giving to homeless people or service providers (or both).

Figure 1. Respondents who are frequently in downtown area*
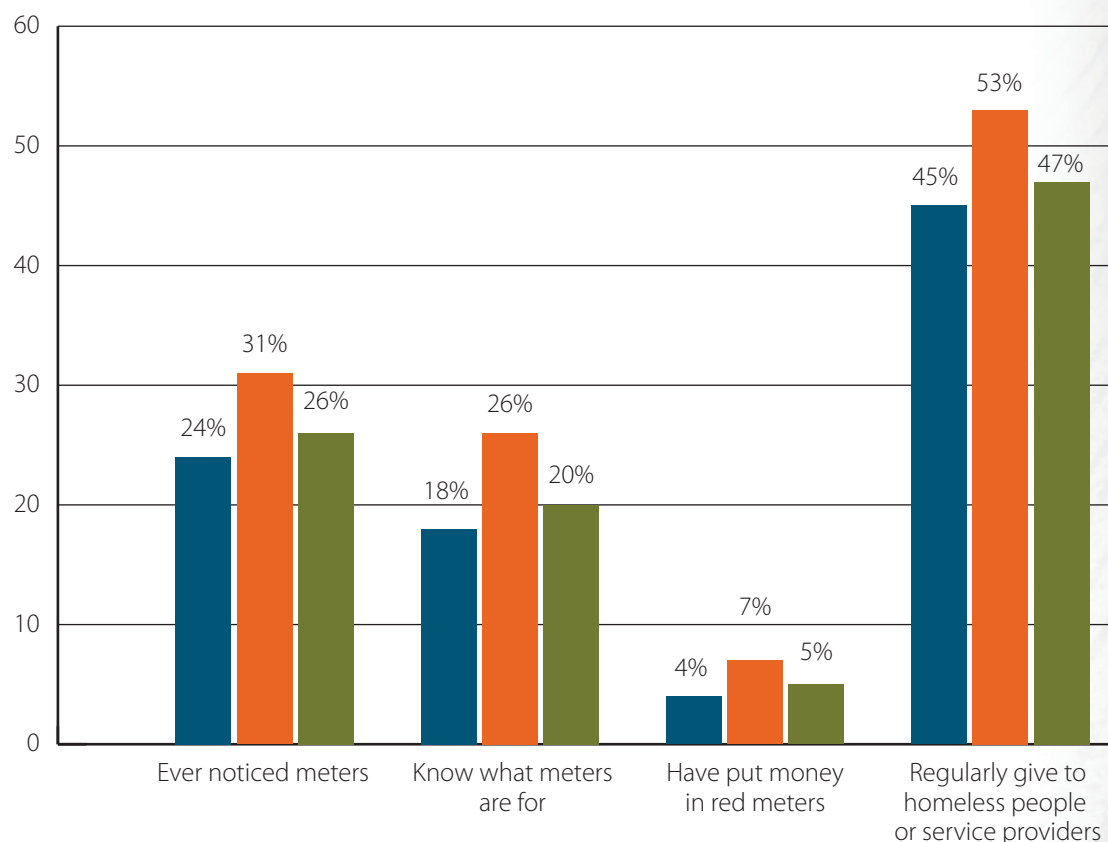
*Calculated out of entire sample of respondents who reported frequently being in downtown Salt Lake City (n = 460).

Although the polling exercise did not include qualitative questions, a few student researchers recorded comments that were made to them by respondents. For instance, a few individuals indicated that some of the meters were covered by foliage and this made it difficult for people to notice them. Two respondents commented that they were made aware of the HOST Red Meters through advertisements in the *Avenues* community newsletter. A team surveying near The Road Home also reported receiving feedback from a number of homeless individuals. According to students, the homeless individuals they talked to were supportive of donations going to the Red Meters instead of to individual panhandlers. Also, while the few respondents (n=12) who reported that they were from out of town were not aware of the meters or the campaign, many offered positive feedback for the purpose of the program and a number expressed an interest in having a similar program started in their home cities.

Homeless Support Group

One of the goals of the COPS Office HOST award was to recruit and train volunteers to assist the HOST team with outreach efforts. The task of planning and implementing the volunteer recruitment efforts was assigned to a partner agency, Utah Volunteers of America (VOA). In the fall of 2013, VOA began piloting the "In Hope We Travel" peer-led homeless social support group (hereinafter referred to as the "Homeless Support Group"). The Homeless Support Group was formed to provide a forum for currently and formerly homeless individuals to meet and support one another (Utah VOA 2013; M. Manazer, pers. comm., August 26, 2013). Formerly homeless volunteers are trained by VOA staff to assist with recruiting group participants, facilitating groups, and connecting individuals with community resources. As described in the VOA's "Strategic Plan for the HOST program,"

> Individuals who experience homelessness are typically disconnected from a supportive social structure. This situation can lead to reluctance to move away from their current lifestyle, which may be providing some semblance of a social environment (i.e., contact with other homeless individuals). Providing an alternative social environment can support the transition away from homelessness and reduce one barrier. Interacting with others who have been 'in their shoes' and who have successfully moved out of homelessness should be a significant support and incentive. All individuals who are homeless will need to receive a number of services and need to work with multiple agencies in order to develop stable work and living conditions. Often services as wide ranging as job training, substance abuse treatment, veterans services, medical and dental care, and disability services may be needed for a single individual to re-establish their status in the community. While many of these programs provide case management to support this process, there often is not enough support to help an individual navigate between all of the services involved (Utah VOA 2013)

Although research on the use of peer-led support groups with homeless individuals is limited, a few programs have shown success using psycho-educational groups to address social isolation and build social supports among this population (Tsai et al. 2011; Tsemberis 1996). For instance, Tsai and colleagues (2011) found that peer support groups for individuals in supportive housing programs "helped maintain frequent contact with clients, minimized staff travel time, and fostered client information-sharing, peer support, and community adaptation" (Tsai et al. 2011, 25). Based on their study of homeless individuals in Toronto, Hwang and colleagues (2009) reported a link between perceived social support and better physical and mental health. Specifically, individuals with financial support (i.e., receive financial advice or aid) were more likely to report better physical health while those who felt emotionally supported reported better mental health. The study also found that homeless people who received instrumental supports (i.e., tangible, material, or behavioral assistance) were less likely to report being victimized.

Methods

This section of the report briefly describes support group participants (e.g., referral source, current housing situation, length of time spent homeless, current areas of need) from data gathered on service tracking sheets completed by participants at the beginning of each homeless support group (see appendix A on page 30). Researchers collected these anonymous

paper tracking sheets from VOA staff and transferred the data into a single SPSS 21.0® file for analysis. As this study was primarily descriptive, response frequencies are the main statistics reported.

Participants completed a tracking sheet every time they attended group. Because of the anonymous nature of those sheets, however, there was no way for researchers to identify sheets by participant, with the exception of sheets on which the participant indicated that he or she was attending for the first time. As such, the data likely include multiple tracking sheets per person. To avoid counting a person who attended the groups three times as three separate people, participant characteristics (e.g., age, gender, referral source) are reported only from the tracking sheets that were filled out at the first meeting (n = 16). Results for the remainder of the data are simply presented for all participation episodes (n = 36) and should not be interpreted as representing individual participants.

A brief participant satisfaction survey (see appendix C on page 32) was also designed by UCJC researchers to gather additional data from group participants. Unfortunately, researchers were not able to complete this survey because of unforeseen issues that resulted in a temporary discontinuation of the support group.

Results

A total of 36 tracking sheets were completed by individuals participating in the homeless support group and nearly half (16, 44 percent) were completed by individuals attending their first meeting. As shown in table 4, the majority of participants were male and between the ages of 41 and 64. Attendees were referred to the group through a variety of sources, but the most common referral source was through a street outreach team.

Table 4a. Age of participants at their first support group meeting

Age of participant	n (%)
30–40	1 (6)
41–51	6 (38)
52–64	7 (44)
65+	2 (13)
Total tracking sheets	16

Table 4b. Gender of participants at their first support group meeting

Gender of participant	n (%)
Female	3 (19)
Male	13 (81)
Total tracking sheets	16

Table 4c. Referral source of participants at their first support group meeting

Referral source	n (%)
Case manager	2 (13)
Friend	3 (19)
Street outreach team	6 (38)
Partnering agency*	3 (19)
Flyer / Walk-in	2 (13)
Total tracking sheets	16

* Partnering agency: Grace Mary Manor (n = 2), Fourth Street Clinic (n = 1)

As shown in table 5, the majority (13, 81 percent) of participants reported that they were housed at the time they attended their first meeting and more than half (7, 54 percent) of the housed attendees had been in housing for more than one year. Prior to being housed, more than half (7, 54 percent) of first-time attendees reported being homeless for six years or more. Three people identified themselves as homeless when they first attended the group and all three had been homeless for one year or more.

Table 5a. Housing status of participants at their first support group meeting

Housing status	n (%)
Homeless*	3 (19)
Housed	13 (81)
Total tracking sheets	16

* Homeless: living on the street (n = 1), in a shelter (n = 2)

Table 5b. Homeless participants at their first support group meeting by length of time homeless

Length of time homeless	n (%)
Less than 1 year	0 (0)
1–5 years	2 (67)
6+ years	1 (33)
Total homeless	3

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Table 5c. Housed participants at their first support group meeting by length of time homeless before being housed

Length of time homeless before being housed	n (%)
Less than 1 year	2 (15)
1–5 years	3 (23)
6+ years	7 (54)
Missing	1 (8)
Total housed	13

Table 5d. Housed participants at their first support group meeting by length of time housed

Length of time housed	n (%)
Less than 1 year	4 (31)
More than 1 year	7 (54)
Missing	2 (15)
Total housed	13

The remainder of results are presented for all tracking sheet responses, including first-time attendees (n = 36). At the beginning of each group meeting, participants were asked to report the number of times they had attended these meetings and what their current areas of need were. On average, participants reported attending the meetings four times (Mn = 4.22, SD = 3.54). A shown in table 6, the most commonly reported areas of need included: clothing (n = 8), housing (n = 8), medical/medication (n = 8), mental health/stress (n = 8), and food (n = 7).

Table 6. Self-reported areas of need by participants at all support group meetings

Area of need	n (%)
Addiction	1 (3)
Clothing	8 (22)
Companionship	5 (14)
Employment	3 (8)
Family reintegration	3 (8)
Food	7 (19)
Housing	8 (22)
Medical / Medication	8 (22)
Mental health / Stress	8 (22)
Total tracking sheets	36

The final question on the tracking sheets asked participants if they had any feedback on the group. Qualitative responses were classified into common themes. A brief description of the most common themes, as well as a count of the number of tracking sheets that mentioned each theme, are provided in table 7. As previously mentioned, these are counts of the number of tracking sheets, not the number of individual participants (see "Methods" section starting on page 9 for additional explanation). Participant comments on the benefits of the groups largely centered on the social aspects of the group, such as being able to help other people and learning from others, as exemplified in the following comment:

> Listening to others and talking about the past-future knowing that you're not alone in this world, and helping each other. Knowing that someone is always around ready to listen and help.

A number of comments noted that the group had helped participants get their needs met (n = 4) and made them more hopeful for the future (n = 4):

> We need more people to know about this meeting. This meeting is really good for people who are lost and have no hope. This meeting gives us hope and information on all that we need to get us started.

Table 7. Benefits of the Homeless Support Group

Description	n
The feeling of being able to help others	8
Learning from others and their experiences	8
Receiving help meeting own needs	4
Hope for the future	4

Collaborative Street Outreach

The third component of the HOST program involves interagency collaboration through street outreach and monthly coordination meetings with representatives from partnering service providers and SLCPD. Through these collaborative efforts, the HOST program seeks to identify homeless individuals who are panhandling or engaging in other types of public nuisance activities in downtown Salt Lake City and connect them to community resources that meet their needs.

In order to examine the impact of the HOST street outreach team on areas such as service referrals, panhandler nuisance issues, and overall community satisfaction, UCJC researchers conducted a brief survey with program stakeholders (see appendix I on page 39). Surveys were conducted during the first day of a two-day HOST training/workshop in May 2014 that was organized by SLCPD. Following the training, UCJC researchers worked with SLCPD personnel to identify additional contacts from partner agencies that were underrepresented or not present at the training. This latter group received the electronic version of the survey in the form of a forwarded e-mail from their agency's contact person that contained an e-mail invitation from UCJC's Director inviting them to participate in the brief, anonymous, online survey. The invitation outlined the nature and purpose of the survey and the two-week time period participants had to complete the survey.

Methods

As this evaluation is primarily descriptive, response frequencies and measures of central tendency are the main statistics reported for quantitative data from the stakeholder survey. Because of small sample size limitations, the majority of results are reported for the entire sample ("combined"). For some variables, additional analyses were run according to respondents' self-reported familiarity[2] with the HOST program (n = 17). Qualitative survey responses were analyzed by coding responses and grouping them into common themes.

Results

A total of 46 stakeholder surveys were completed. As shown in table 8 on page 16, more than half (25, 54 percent) of surveys were completed by law enforcement officers and the rest were completed by various service providers (e.g., The Road Home homeless shelter, Department of Workforce Services). Although most police officers were from SLCPD, a few officers from the Unified Police Department (UPD) and the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) also completed the survey.

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2. Familiar: Respondents who rated themselves as an 8, 9, or 10 on a 1–10 scale of familiarity with HOST

Table 8. Survey respondents by organization or agency

Organization or agency	n (%)
Salt Lake City Police Department	21 (46)
Other law enforcement (e.g., UPD, UTA)	4 (9)
The Road Home	8 (17)
Department of Workforce Services	7 (15)
Veterans Administration	2 (4)
Catholic Community Services	1 (2)
Salt Lake Downtown Alliance	1 (2)
Salt Lake City Corporation	1 (2)
Valley Mental Health—storefront	1 (2)
Total	46

As shown in figure 2, nearly all respondents either "somewhat" or "strongly" agreed that Salt Lake City has a problem with panhandlers (40, 87 percent) and that the public should donate to homeless service providers instead of giving directly to individual panhandlers (42, 93 percent).[3]

Figure 2. Panhandling in Salt Lake City
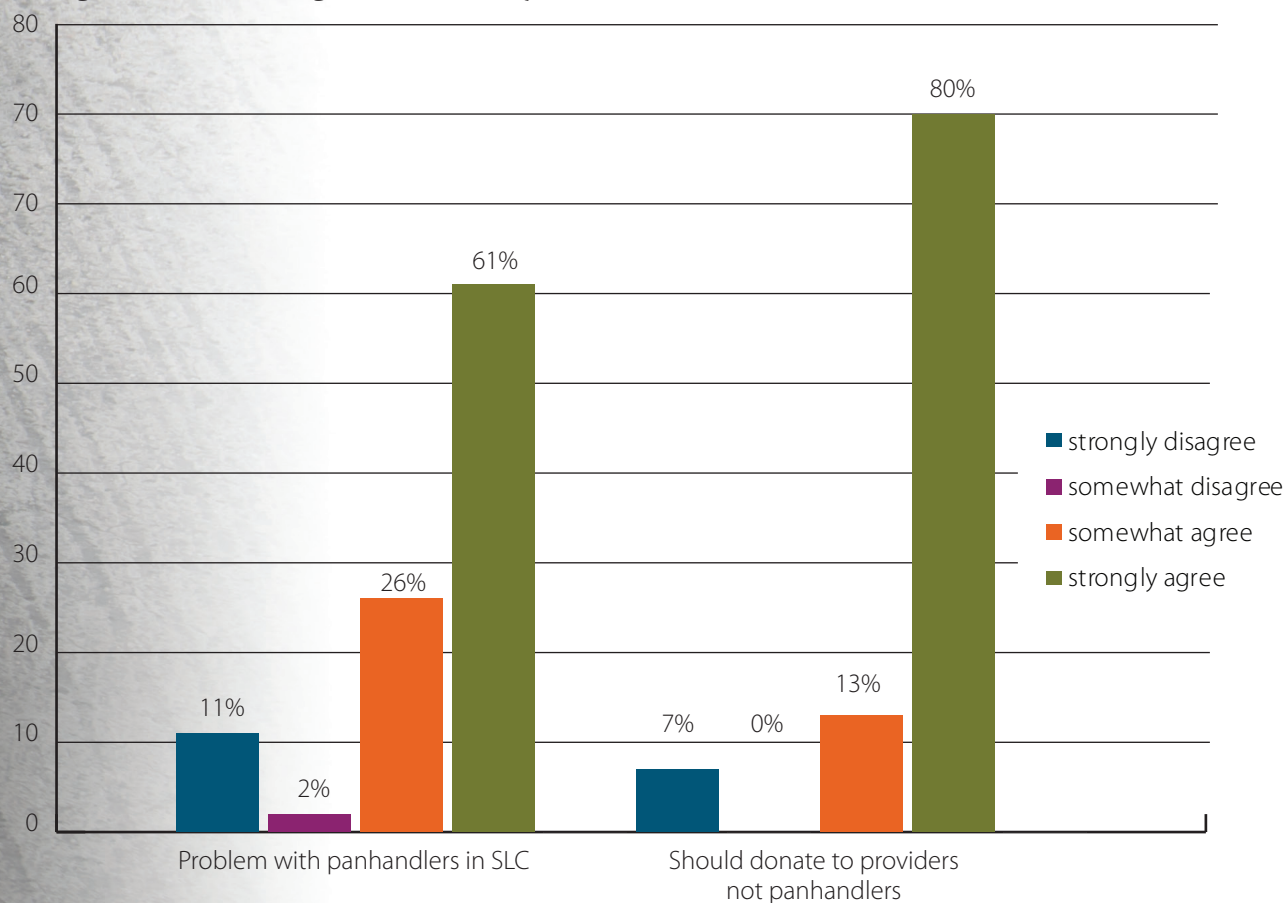
3. Percent calculated out of the 45 respondents who answered this question.

Familiarity with the HOST program

Respondents were asked to rate their familiarity with the HOST program on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not familiar" and 10 being "very familiar." The average rating for all respondents was just over 6 (Mean = 6.04) and only two of the 46 respondents reported that they were "not familiar" with the HOST program. These two surveys were excluded from the remainder of analyses, thereby reducing the total sample size to 44 respondents.

At the time of the survey, approximately half of respondents (21, 48 percent) had been aware of the HOST program for more than one year and 70 percent (n = 31) had been aware of it for at least six months. Four of the respondents identified themselves as members of the HOST street outreach team and one was a peer mentor for HOST. The majority (35, 80 percent) of respondents heard about the HOST program from an employer or a colleague at their agency.[4] Respondents also heard about the HOST program from colleagues at other agencies (9, 21 percent); newspaper, television, or radio stories (4, 9 percent); and through advertising on UTA buses and/or TRAX trains (6, 14 percent).

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4. Respondents were able to check multiple responses to this question.

Impact of the HOST program

In the survey, respondents were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements. Table 9 presents the number and percent of respondents who "somewhat" or "strongly agree" with the statements (reported separately for the whole sample and for those who were familiar with the program). As shown in the table, the majority of respondents reported that HOST had a positive impact on interactions between the homeless and SLCPD officers, increased information sharing between SLCPD and service providers, increased information sharing between service providers, and increased collaboration between SLCPD and service providers. Slightly more than half (57 percent) of respondents reported a positive impact on the interactions between the homeless and downtown Salt Lake business; however, when limited to respondents who were familiar with the program, this rose to 88 percent (n = 15). One-third (32 percent) of respondents reported an increase in referrals to their agency as a result of the HOST program.

Table 9a. Impacts of HOST according to all respondents (n = 44)

	n (%)*	Mean†
Positive impact on interactions between the homeless and the general public	19 (43)	2.47
Positive impact on interactions between the homeless and downtown Salt Lake businesses	25 (57)	2.75
Positive impact on interactions between the homeless and SLCPD officers	31 (71)	2.90
Increased information sharing between service providers	35 (80)	2.93
Increased information sharing between SLCPD and service providers	31 (71)	2.85
Increased collaboration between SLCPD and service providers	34 (77)	3.02
Increased referrals to respondent's agency	14 (32)	2.46

* Number and percent of respondents who answered "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree"

† Mean score: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = somewhat disagree; 3 = somewhat agree; 4 = strongly agree

Table 9b. Impacts of HOST according to respondents familiar with the program (n = 17)*

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	n (%)†	Mean‡
Positive impact on interactions between the homeless and the general public	8 (47)	2.31
Positive impact on interactions between the homeless and downtown Salt Lake businesses	15 (88)	2.87
Positive impact on interactions between the homeless and SLCPD officers	14 (82)	3.06
Increased information sharing between service providers	14 (82)	2.88
Increased information sharing between SLCPD and service providers	15 (88)	2.88
Increased collaboration between SLCPD and service providers	14 (82)	3.12
Increased referrals to respondent's agency	7 (41)	2.64

* Familiar: Respondents who rated themselves at 8, 9, or 10 on a 1–10 scale of familiarity with HOST

† Number and percent of respondents who answered "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree"

‡ Mean score: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = somewhat disagree; 3 = somewhat agree; 4 = strongly agree

Respondents were asked if the HOST program had any impact on their job or their agency. Open-ended responses were coded into three categories: none/minimal, negative, and positive impact. Although many respondents reported that HOST has had little or no impact on their job (n = 12) or agency (n = 8), those who did reported an impact primarily reported a positive one.[5] Descriptions and frequency of positive impacts are reported in table 10. The few negative impacts reported included: being required to attend more meetings, having more "non-productive work," and "having one less officer on the street."

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5. Impact on job: negative (n = 2), positive (n = 13); Impact on agency: negative (n = 2), positive (n = 13)

Table 10a. Positive impacts of HOST on respondents' job and agency—service provider and other partner respondents*

Description	n
Improved communication, information sharing, and collaboration between partners	3
Increase in referrals and client participation	3
Increased awareness of the issues and services available	3
Improved relationship with police	3
Additional services and outreach to assist clients	2

* Responses from the two questions asking about the impact on the respondent's job and their agency were combined and are reported with only one response per type counting for each respondent.

Table 10b. Positive impacts of HOST on respondents' job and agency—law enforcement respondents*

Description	n
Helping connect homeless with service providers, less punitive approach	3
Improved relationship with service providers	2
Improved relationship with homeless	2

* Responses from the two questions asking about the impact on the respondent's job and their agency were combined and are reported with only one response per type counting for each respondent.

Respondents were also asked about the impact of the HOST program on homeless individuals in Salt Lake City. Once again, open-ended responses were coded into three categories: none/minimal, negative, and positive impact. Five respondents indicated that HOST had little or no impact on Salt Lake's homeless population; however, a few of those individuals expressed optimism that this would change as the program matures. Descriptions and frequency of the positive impacts reported are provided in table 11 on page 21. A few respondents noted that although they had already observed some positive impacts of the program on the homeless, they believed that with increased manpower and collaboration the program had the potential to have an even larger impact:

> I think the program has a good start and has great potential for expanded impact. Police have been working hard to collaborate and work with businesses and providers alike and homeless community and finding solutions.

The few respondents who reported negative impacts of the program expressed a concern that the program was enabling the homeless and was not holding them accountable for criminal activity.

Table 11a. Positive impacts of HOST on homeless individuals in SLC—service provider and other partner respondents

Description	n
Increased access to services (e.g., housing, treatment)	6
Increased awareness of the issues and services available	4
Improved relationship between homeless and police	3

Table 11b. Positive impacts of HOST on homeless individuals in SLC—law enforcement respondents

Description	n
Increased access to services (e.g., housing, treatment)	5
Improved relationship between homeless and police	1

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Looking Back and Moving Forward

Respondents were asked what they perceived as the greatest barriers to the past and future success of the HOST program. As shown in figure 3 on page 23, the most commonly identified past barriers included: police support, leadership/mission, agency collaboration, and service provider support. The most commonly identified future barriers included: public support, funding, police support, and political support.

In addition to identifying perceived barriers to success, respondents were also asked to provide suggestions for improving the program. Responses were grouped into three primary categories: program direction, expansion, and building support for the program.

Figure 3. Greatest barriers to the success of the HOST program

past   future
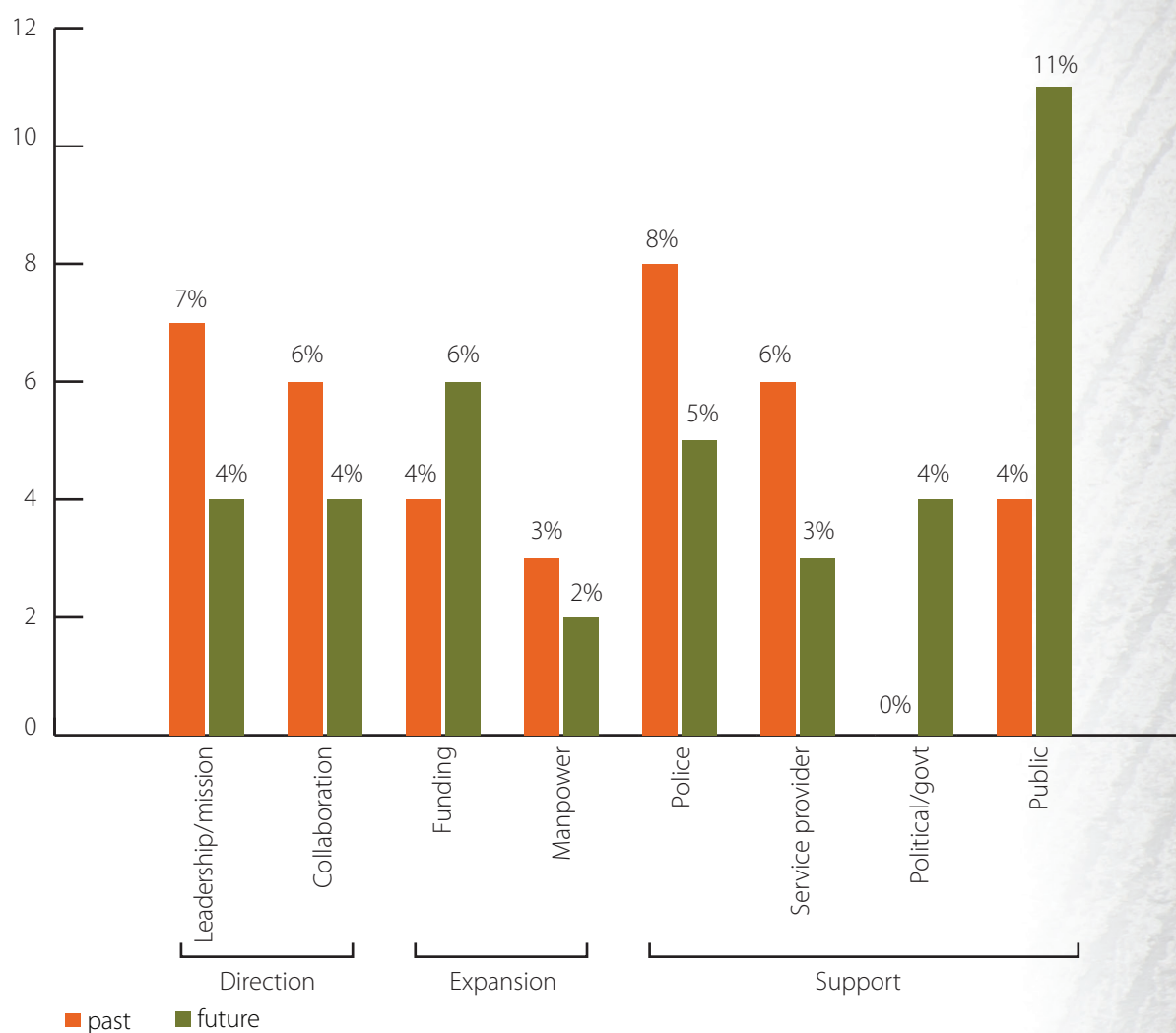
Program direction

As shown in figure 3, seven respondents identified program leadership/mission as one of the greatest past barriers and four identified it as a future barrier. A few respondents suggested that in addition to the police department, leadership responsibilities should be shared by the city (n = 1) and service providers (n = 2):

> HOST should be led by SL City (Liz) [SLC Homeless Services Coordinator] and the police. Sam [SLCPD HOST Coordinator] is terrific but doesn't have the authority to pull in the needed resources.

Respondents were also asked to describe the mission of the HOST program. The most common responses were the connection of the homeless with service providers (37 respondents) and the collaboration between the SLCPD and service providers (n = 20). Five respondents also described efforts to reduce panhandling by encouraging the public to donate to homeless service providers instead of panhandlers. Slightly less than half (21, 48 percent) of respondents felt that the HOST program was achieving its mission; however, three of these respondents reported that although they felt the mission was being achieved, it was different from what they initially thought it was. When limited to respondents who were familiar with the program, 10 out of 17 (59 percent) agreed that the HOST program was achieving its mission. A number of respondents suggested that there was confusion, especially among the service providers, regarding the mission and purpose of the program and that it was important that those things be more clearly defined (n = 5) so that everyone involved was on the same page (n = 3). Less than half (18, 41 percent) of respondents "somewhat" or "strongly agree" that stakeholders have a shared vision of the purpose of the HOST program. When limited to respondents who were familiar with the program, 10 out of 17 (59 percent) agreed that stakeholders have a shared vision.

Six respondents identified lack of collaboration between service provider agencies and the SLCPD as one of the greatest past barriers and four identified it as one of the greatest barriers to the future of the program (see figure 3 on page 23). Similarly, a number of respondents suggested that in order for the program to be more effective, there needed to be better interagency collaboration (n = 9) and communication (n = 7), as well as regular meetings between SLCPD and the service providers (n = 3). A few respondents commented that although collaboration and communication were strong when the program first started, this component seemed to have dissipated over time:

> I like the way it was before. We all met and worked cases. We had people with hard issues and we worked and got it solved as good as it could be taken care of. Now you might call for help but never know if anything will happen.

Similarly, a number of respondents commented on the need to hold the collaborative meetings (n = 3) and street outreach (n = 5) more consistently. Two respondents mentioned the need for the HOST outreach team to coordinate with other street outreach teams operating in the areas in order to reduce duplication. Another respondent suggested that the HOST program should stop doing street outreach and focus its efforts on advocacy and collecting donations for providers:

> Go more to an advocacy role and let agencies do outreach with police support...
> Concentrate on advocacy and getting dollars away from panhandlers, to service providers.

Seven respondents suggested that additional community partners should be invited to receive training on and participate in these meetings or street outreach. Although most respondents did not identify potential partners by name, one suggested that city council representatives be included and two respondents from local law enforcement agencies (e.g., UPD, UTA) expressed an interest in getting involved with the program:

> We want to become involved in a solution as our dept (UTA transit police) deals extensively with this population.

Expansion

Four respondents identified funding as one of the greatest past barriers and six identified it as one of the greatest barriers to the program's future (see figure 3 on page 23). Although few respondents[6] identified a lack of manpower as one of the greatest barriers to the program, 14 respondents did suggest that having one officer assigned to the program was insufficient and that additional officers would need to be assigned to the program in order for it to be more effective and expand. In addition to increasing the number of officers assigned to the program, a few respondents highlighted the importance of recruiting officers who are a good match to the program. As one law enforcement respondent stated:

> [The program needs] more officers who are better informed, who have good relationships with homeless and service providers.

Similarly, a respondent from one of the service providers stated:

> I would love to see an expansion of the HOST team to include other officers who are willing to collaborate and partner with us. . . . Expand the program to include more officers who are invested and interested in effectively addressing homelessness.

---

6. Three respondents identified manpower as one of the greatest past barriers to the program, and two identified it as one of the greatest future barriers.

Building support

Six respondents suggested that additional officers, including those not assigned to the program, be trained on the HOST program and issues surrounding homelessness:

> I think it needs clearer direction for law enforcement purposes. Educating law enforcement as to what services are available as well as the public so we can all work together.

Several respondents (n = 3) also suggested that officers, especially those patrolling the downtown area, be provided with lists of resources and contact information for homeless service providers.

Three respondents also suggested that more information on the program, and how the referral process works, should be shared with service providers. As one respondent from a partner agency noted:

> I think a lot of staff don't even know about the HOST program at all. They don't know how to refer people either.

As previously noted, the majority (80 percent) of respondents heard about the HOST program through their employer or a colleague at their agency. This highlights the important role that service providers can play in the dissemination of information on the program within their agencies.

Five respondents noted the importance of sharing information on available resources and the purpose of the HOST program with the homeless. A few respondents also commented on the importance of breaking down the barriers that often exist between law enforcement and the homeless. As previously mentioned, nearly three-quarters (31, 71 percent) of respondents reported that the program has already had a positive impact on the relationship between law enforcement and the homeless. As noted by a service provider respondent:

> [HOST] helped educate them regarding services and helped dispel stereotypes that all officers are assholes.

A number of respondents suggested that public support could be increased by increasing awareness of the program and educating the community on the negative impacts of giving money to panhandlers:

> [There is a need for more] media coverage. If the citizens understood the program, the program would be more effective.

Specific suggestions provided by respondents for increasing awareness and support for the program include the following:

- Trainings for
    - law enforcement officers;
    - service providers;
    - downtown businesses

- Increase program visibility:

    - Additional officers assigned to the program

    - More frequent HOST street outreach

    - Additional meters (including at the Salt Lake International Airport)

- Media campaign:

    - Television commercials

    - Radio advertising during rush hour

    - Billboards

    - Public service announcements

    - Flyers/handouts

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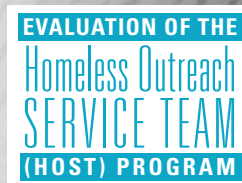
The HOST program is a collaborative venture between law enforcement, the business community, and social service providers, which strives to reduce public nuisance activities without criminalizing homelessness. The program comprises several initiatives, including increased public awareness of homelessness, increased public donations to homeless service providers, improved relationships between law enforcement and homeless individuals, improved relationships between law enforcement and homeless service providers, and increased access to services for homeless persons.

Unfortunately, the impact of the media campaign on increased public awareness of the HOST program and donations to the Red Meters is not clear. While a greater percentage of public polling respondents were aware of the Red Meters in the post-campaign phase, the numbers were small and the data were insufficient to conduct significance testing. The polling results do indicate, however, that proximity to the Red Meters (e.g., spending time downtown) was associated with greater awareness. Perhaps an increased number of Red Meters located in a larger geographic area would increase the number of individuals who are aware of the program.

Client data suggest that through the Homeless Support Group, HOST has positively impacted individuals' experience in the transition from homelessness to being housed. Despite the fact that most participants were housed prior to attending the support group, many of these participants reported experiencing difficulties with respect to basic needs, social support, and medical care. These responses indicate that simply being housed is not sufficient, in and of itself, to fully address formerly homeless persons' resource and social needs. The provision of ongoing support services, even after housing, may be one means of supporting positive lifestyle changes and discouraging activities such as panhandling and public nuisance activities.

As previously noted, the majority of community partners who participated in the stakeholder survey reported that HOST had a positive impact on: interactions between the homeless and SLCPD officers; increased information sharing between SLCPD and service providers; increased information between service providers; and increased collaboration between SLCPD and service providers. Even when describing resistance to HOST, partners also noted a positive impact:

> Agency as a whole seems to think it unnecessary and a waste of resources, but it has still taken police-related, problem people and housed and worked with them, solving some issues and lessening police responses to those issues.

In terms of program development, most survey respondents focused on internal program barriers (e.g., police and service provider support) as reasons that the program has not achieved its potential. When considering long-term sustainability and expansion of the program, however, respondents perceived the greatest future barriers to be external to the program (e.g., public support, funding, political support). In its current form, the HOST program appears to have made positive change with respect to the community response to homelessness, despite being perceived as under-resourced.

Appendix A. Support Group Service Tracking Sheets

To protect your anonymity, please do not provide your name.

Date of Meeting: ___/___/____

First Meeting Only:

1. How did you hear about the meetings?

☐Case Manager ☐Friend ☐Street Outreach Team ☐Other:_____

2. What is your age?

☐18-29 ☐30-40 ☐41-51 ☐52-64 ☐65+

3. What is your gender?

☐Male ☐Female

4. Are you currently housed?

☐Yes ☐No

If yes to question 4, answer the next two questions.

   How long were you homeless prior to current housing?

   ☐ less than 1 year ☐1-5 years ☐ 6+ years

   How long have you been housed?

   ☐less than 1 year ☐1 year ☐more than 1 year

If no to question 4, answer the following question.

   How long have you been homeless?

   ☐ less than 1 year ☐1-5 years ☐ 6+ years

Please answer the following every meeting:

How many of these meetings have you attended? _____

What is your current living situation?

☐Street ☐Shelter ☐Apartment/Home ☐Other: _____

What are your current needs? (Check all that apply)

☐ Addiction ☐Companionship ☐Clothing ☐Employment ☐Food ☐ Family Reintegration
☐Housing ☐Medical/Medication ☐Mental Health/Stress ☐Other:_____

Please tell us if you have any hopes for today's meeting? Any feedback about the meetings?

Appendix B. Support Group Participant Satisfaction Consent Cover Letter
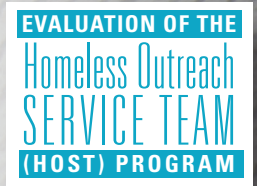
Consent and authorization cover letter

You are being asked to take part in a research study conducted by the Utah Criminal Justice Center at the University of Utah. Before you decide whether or not to participate it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and ask us if there is anything that is not clear or that you would like more information on.

The purpose of the study is to gather information on the services provided through the Homeless Outreach Street Team (HOST) program, including the "In Hope We Travel" group. We would like to invite you to take this brief anonymous survey to help us gather some information to help improve the program. You should not put your name or any other identifying information on the survey. All data will be combined and reported as a whole.

If you have any questions complaints or if you feel you have been harmed by this research please contact [the director of the program].

It should take approximately *10 minutes* to complete this survey. Participation in this study is voluntary. You can choose not to take part. You can choose not to finish the survey or omit any question(s) you prefer not to answer without penalty or loss of benefits. If you do not wish to participate, please return the blank survey to the UCJC researcher. By completing this survey and returning it to the researcher, you are giving your consent and authorization to participate.

Thank you for your participation in this study.

Appendix C. Participant Satisfaction Survey

Feedback on the "In Hope We Travel" group meetings

1. How many times have you attended these meetings?

2. What was your living situation when you started attending these meetings?

    - Street

    - Shelter

    - Apartment/Home

    - Other: *please specify* _____

Instructions: If this is your first time attending this meeting, please skip to question #4.

3. What is your current living situation?

    - Street

    - Shelter

    - Apartment/Home

    - Other: *please specify*

4. How likely are you to continue attending these meetings?

    - Very likely

    - Somewhat likely

    - Somewhat unlikely

    - Very unlikely

5. What are the most common topics addressed during the meetings?

6. What additional issues/needs would you like addressed at these meetings?

7. How comfortable do you feel bringing up your specific needs during meetings?

- Very comfortable

- Somewhat comfortable

- Somewhat uncomfortable

- Very uncomfortable

Instructions: How strongly would you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
8. The location(s) where the meetings are held are convenient.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. The times when the meetings are held are convenient.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. I would recommend these meetings to a friend or family member.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. These meetings have helped me connect with additional community resources.	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. Do you have any suggestions for improving these meetings?

13. What do you like most about these meetings?

14. Additional comments:

Thank you for your participation!

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Appendix D. Public Polling – Script

HOST script

Hi, we are a research team from the University of Utah and we are working with Salt Lake City on a project in the downtown area. Do you have time to answer 4–5 quick questions?

1. Have you ever noticed the HOST Red Meters around downtown?

Yes	No
2. Do you know what they are for?	2. Do you regularly give to homeless people who request money?
3. Have you ever put money in them?	3. How often are you in downtown Salt Lake?
4. Do you regularly give to homeless people who request money?	
5. How often are you in downtown Salt Lake?	

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me.

If they are interested, here's a little information about the HOST Red Meters and this project that you can share with them:

- The Red Meters were placed by Salt Lake City and sponsored by businesses to encourage the public to give money to service providers that serve the homeless population (ex: The Road Home) instead of giving money directly to homeless individuals who request it.

- Zion's Bank has offered to match up to $25,000 of donations the city receives

- If you would like more information about the red meters, they can go to the programs website (*hand them a card*)

****Tips****

- You will find that the survey is very brief, so if they tell you that they don't have time, you can ask them if they know anything about the HOST Red Meters downtown and go from there.

- Utilize THEIR time, so if they are walking you can ask them if you can walk with them and ask them 4-5 quick questions.

- Stop lights/intersections are a great place to ask people by saying, "Can I ask you 4-5 quick questions while you wait for the light?"

- When you are in partners, you can ask 4-5 people at a time

- Look for people who are sitting around (ex: Trax stations, ledges, benches, tables)

Thank you for your help! Call for anything: [names and numbers]

Appendix E. Public Polling – Student Researcher Instructions
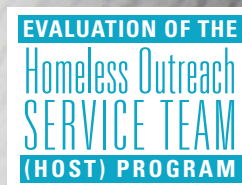
U of U HOST research project

We are working with the City of Salt Lake to determine the effect of advertising for the RED METERS in downtown Salt Lake. In 2010 the business district joined efforts with the City of Salt Lake to place RED METERS at varying spots for individuals to donate to the homeless cause in Salt Lake City. They have raised some monies since that time and would like to measure whether advertising the RED METERS increases the amount of money donated. The RED METERS take the place of putting money in the hands of panhandlers, and instead gives it to community resources like the Road Home.

We have been asked to survey the current population downtown about their knowledge of these RED METERS and if they have ever donated to the RED METERS. The survey is brief, only 4-5 questions, and then we will be giving them information about the RED METERS and this project. We will be surveying people located downtown at varying places: on the streets near businesses, Trax stations, etc.

Items you may need:

- Things for the sun: sunscreen, water, etc.

- Walking attire: good shoes, comfortable clothing, etc.

We will provide you with a tag indicating that you are a part of Research team with the University of Utah. We will assign you an area and ask you to meet us at 1 of these locations:

May 18th or July 20th:

- Gallivan Center: in front of Channel 2 station, east side of the street across from the Trax station

- Clark Planetarium: west side of the street across from the Trax station

May 22nd or July 17th:

- City Creek: outside of Nordstrom's across from Abravanel Hall

- Pioneer Park: North side of 300 South in the Caputos parking lot

PLEASE NOTE THESE PHONE NUMBERS and CONTACT US WITH ANY QUESTIONS:

[names and numbers]

Appendix F. Public Polling – Map of Meter Locations

1 — GSBS ARCHITECTS — 147 W Broadway

2 — THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS — 302 W. South Temple

3 — JAZZ — 90 S. 300 West

4 — SQUATTERS PUBS — 147 W. Broadway

5 — Visit SALT LAKE, The Convention & Visitors Bureau — 90 S. West Temple

6 — ASTRONOMY INC. — 60 W. Market Street

7 — ZIONS BANK — 1 S. Main St., 102 S. Main St., 310 S. Main St.

8 — AmericanWest Bank — 175 S. Main Street

9 — RAY QUINNEY & NEBEKER ATTORNEYS AT LAW — 36 S. State Street

10 — Portable Meter - 2012 Farmers Market — The Jeff Stokes Family — 300 s. 300 w.

11 — RED IGUANA — 736 West North Temple

Appendix G. Public Polling – Data Collection Tool

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HOST PROJECT

TEAM MEMBER NAMES:

DATE:

LOCATION:

	Have you ever noticed the red meters around downtown?		Do you know what they are for?		Have you ever put money in them?		Do you regularly give money to homeless people and/or homeless providers?		How often are you in downtown Salt Lake City?		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Frequently 1x/week	Occasionally 1x/month	Rarely <1x /month
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Appendix H. Stakeholder Survey Consent Cover Letter

Consent cover letter

In 2012, the Salt Lake City Police Department (SLCPD) received an award from the Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to expand the recently created Homeless Outreach Service Team (HOST) program. Salt Lake City has requested that the University of Utah, Utah Criminal Justice Center (UCJC), conduct a study to examine the perceptions, roles, and responsibilities of personnel and key stakeholders involved with the HOST program, as well as the impact of services provided by the grant. As a HOST stakeholder your feedback is extremely valuable and your participation in this survey would be greatly appreciated.

Your anonymity will be maintained and all data will be aggregated and reported as a whole. Information obtained by the researchers is recorded in such a manner that participants **CANNOT** be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the participants. The University of Utah team will analyze the survey data and create a full report of the findings.

If you have any questions complaints or if you feel you have been harmed by this research please contact [the director of the program].

It should take *15–20 minutes* to complete the survey. Participation in this study is voluntary. You can choose not to take part. You can choose not to finish the survey or omit any question you prefer not to answer without penalty or loss of benefits.

By filling out this survey, you are giving your consent to participate.

Thank you for your participation in this project.

Appendix I. Stakeholder Survey

Stakeholder survey May 2014
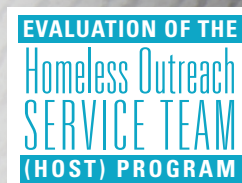
1. What organization/agency do you work for:

☐   Salt Lake City Police Department (SLCPD)
☐   Volunteers of America (VOA)
☐   4th Street Clinic
☐   The Road Home
☐   Valley Mental Health (VMH) Storefront
☐   Veteran's Administration (VA)
☐   Catholic Community Services
☐   Salt Lake Downtown Alliance
☐   Salt Lake City Corporation
☐   Other (please specify)_____

Instructions: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
2. Salt Lake City has a problem with panhandlers.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. The public should donate to homeless service providers instead of giving directly to individual panhandlers.	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your level of familiarity with the HOST program?

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Not familiar---Very familiar

5. In what capacity are you involved with the HOST program? (*select all that apply*)

☐ HOST street outreach team member
☐ Partner Agency - direct service provider
☐ Partner Agency - administrator
☐ Steering Committee member
☐ Peer Mentor
☐ Other (*please specify*)_____

6. How long have you been aware of the HOST program?

☐   Less than 6 months

☐   6 – 12 months

☐   More than 1 year

7. Where have you heard about the HOST program? (*select all that apply*)

☐   Employer/colleague at <u>my</u> agency

☐   Colleague at <u>another</u> agency

☐   Newspaper, television, or radio

☐   Advertising on UTA buses and TRAX trains

☐   Other (*please specify*)_____

8.   Prior to the current training, have you attended any *other* HOST- specific trainings?

☐   Yes

☐   No

If <u>yes</u>, please describe the purpose of the training(s) in the space provided below.

In your opinion…

9. What is the mission of the HOST program?

10. Overall, do you feel that the HOST program is achieving its mission?

☐   Yes, for the most part

☐   Yes, but the mission is different than what I initially thought it was

☐   No

☐   Other (*please specify*)

11. What if anything, do you think the project could do differently to better achieve its mission?

12. What are the components of the HOST program?

Instructions: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	N/A
13. HOST has led to increased information sharing between homeless service providers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. HOST has increased collaboration between the police department and homeless service providers in the Salt Lake area.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. HOST has led to increased information sharing between the police department and homeless service providers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. HOST has had a positive impact on interactions between SLCPD officers and the homeless.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. HOST has had a positive impact on interactions between downtown Salt Lake businesses and the homeless.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. HOST has had a positive impact on interactions between the public and the homeless.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. My agency has seen an increase in referrals as a result of the HOST program.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. Stakeholders have a shared vision of the purpose of the HOST program.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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In your opinion...

21. What could be done to further increase public awareness of the HOST program?

22. What could be done to make the HOST program more effective?

23. What are the greatest challenges that the HOST program has faced so far?

24. What do you see as the greatest barriers to the success of the HOST program in the future?

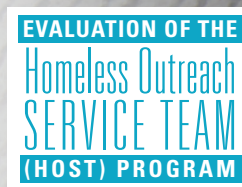25. What impact has the HOST program had on *your job*?

26. What impact has the HOST program had on your *agency*?

27. What impact has the HOST program had on the *homeless individuals* in Salt Lake City?

28. Additional comments:

Thank you for your participation!

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About the COPS Office

The **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)** is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing begins with a commitment to building trust and mutual respect between police and communities. It supports public safety by encouraging all stakeholders to work together to address our nation's crime challenges. When police and communities collaborate, they more effectively address underlying issues, change negative behavioral patterns, and allocate resources.

Rather than simply responding to crime, community policing focuses on preventing it through strategic problem solving approaches based on collaboration. The COPS Office awards grants to hire community police and support the development and testing of innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders, as well as all levels of law enforcement.

Another source of COPS Office assistance is the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA). Developed to advance community policing and ensure constitutional practices, CRI-TA is an independent, objective process for organizational transformation. It provides recommendations based on expert analysis of policies, practices, training, tactics, and accountability methods related to issues of concern.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than $14 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing.

- To date, the COPS Office has funded the hiring of approximately 127,000 additional officers by more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies in both small and large jurisdictions.

- Nearly 700,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations.

- To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than eight million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs.

- The COPS Office also sponsors conferences, roundtables, and other forums focused on issues critical to law enforcement.

The COPS Office information resources, covering a wide range of community policing topics— from school and campus safety to gang violence—can be downloaded at www.cops.usdoj.gov. This website is also the grant application portal, providing access to online application forms.

The Homeless Outreach Service Team (HOST) program was developed to bring Salt Lake City (Utah) police and community outreach workers together to identify homeless individuals and connect them to community resources. The objectives were to encourage police to make referrals to services rather than issue citations and to decrease panhandling by encouraging the public to give money to homeless service providers instead.

In 2012, the Salt Lake City Police Department received an award from the COPS Office to expand the HOST program to fund a public awareness campaign, coordinate strategic planning efforts, and train homeless individuals to assist with outreach efforts.

Salt Lake City has contracted with the Utah Criminal Justice Center to examine the impact of the award on the program's services and personnel. This report evaluates three primary components of the program: donations to homeless service providers, the homeless support group, and collaborative street outreach.