If You Give a Feast, Invite the Poor: Inviting the Homeless to the Planning Table

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

If You Give a Feast, Invite the Poor:
Inviting the Homeless to the Planning Table

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Social Ecology

by

Jessica Lauren Perez

Dissertation Committee:
Chancellor’s Professor Daniel Stokols, Chair
Associate Professor Dara Sorkin
Professor and Chair David Feldman

2016
DEDICATION

Mom, you are my greatest teacher. One of many lessons learned from you is that some challenges that people face are not easily seen but are no less real than the ones that are. I couldn’t have done any of it without you.

Dad, I’ll never forget your parting words to me when you dropped me off at college—“go and do the things I never got to do, then come back and tell me all about them.” This one’s for you.

To the homeless men and women who were generous enough to share their stories with me. Their resilience and perseverance inspires me every day to lend a voice to those that are often not heard.
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I would also like to recognize the service providers who have opened up their doors and hearts to me, who were also in many regards my teachers, and without whom this work could not have been possible.

Thank you to my friends, especially Amrita and Jasmine, for the companionship, support, laughs, and love. And to Dirk, I thank you for the million ways, big and small, that you inspire me to shine brighter.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Education

Ph.D. University of California, Irvine, Social Ecology
Dissertation: “If You Give a Feast, Invite the Poor”
Chair: Daniel Stokols, Ph.D. June 2016

M.A. University of California, Irvine, Social Ecology
Thesis: “An Evaluation of Success: The Salvation Army’s Transitional Housing”
Chair: Dara Sorkin, Ph.D. June 2015

B.S. University of Central Florida, Psychology
Graduated Cum Laude
Certificate in Criminal Profiling June 2009

Teaching Experience

Concordia University, Irvine
Adjunct Faculty, Behavioral Sciences Major
2015
Using a variety of teaching techniques and assessment to foster individual learning and development in a Social Psychology class of 35 students. Responsible for all aspects of the course including syllabus and learning assessment design; lesson delivery; grading of written, oral, and multiple choice assessments; and online (Blackboard) and in-person course management.

University of California, Irvine
Teaching Assistant, School of Social Ecology
Naturalistic Field Research (four quarters); Water Resource Policy (three quarters); Research Methods (two quarters); Deviance (two quarters); Environmental Psychology; Leadership (online) 2010-2016

Research Experience

Dissertation, Lead Researcher
“If You Give a Feast, Invite the Poor”
2013-2015
Skills Acquired: Community Based Participatory Action Research, Proficient in NVivo (qualitative data analysis software), Understanding of Local Policy Process, Understanding of Government-Nonprofit partnerships, Knowledge in Organizational Theory and Decision Making, Identifying and Managing Community Stakeholders, Strategies for Incorporating Client Feedback, Client Advocacy

Manuscript for Publication, Lead Researcher
“Evaluating the Policy-Practice Gap in a Transitional Housing Program”
2014
Skills Acquired: Process Evaluation, Tool Development and Testing

Report for the Salvation Army Orange County, Lead Researcher
“Storing the Homeless: Men’s Experiences Using Emergency Shelter”
2013
Skills Acquired: Designing and Facilitating Focus Groups, Report-Writing
Manuscript for Publication, Lead Researcher 2012-2013
“Why Homeless Women are Underutilizing Emergency Shelter”

Second Year Project, Lead Researcher 2011
“An Evaluation of Success: The Salvation Army’s Transitional Housing”
Skills Acquired: Program Evaluation, Non-Profit Management, Assessing and Addressing Client Needs, Ethnographic Methods, Participatory Action Research

“An Evaluation of Success: H.I.S. House”
Skills Acquired: Proposal Writing

“From Indians to Chicanos: The Dynamics of Mexican-American Culture”
Skills Acquired: Reading and Synthesizing Complex Information

Publications


Presentations and Panel Participation

Conference Presentations


“Service Use Among Homeless Women in Orange County,” Annual Meeting of the Urban Affairs Association, San Francisco, CA, 2013

Invited Presentations

“Understanding Service Use Among Homeless,” Presented as a Guest Speaker for Undergraduate Research Methods Course, Irvine, CA, 2014

“Service Use Among the Homeless in Orange County,” Presented as a Guest Speaker for On-Campus Organization, Irvine, CA, 2014

“When You Give A Feast: Invite the Poor: Why Inviting the Homeless to the Planning Table Matters,” Presented as a Guest Speaker at the Newkirk Center for Science and Society Graduate Student Fellows Annual Luncheon, Irvine, CA, 2014

“Understanding Service Use Among the Homeless Women in Orange County,” Presented at the Planning, Policy and Design Student Research Forum, Irvine, CA, 2014

Panel Member


Making a Decision: Selecting the Right Graduate Program for You, UCI Graduate Division Workshop, February 6, 2012.

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Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program  
University of Central Florida

Professional Service

Ad Hoc Reviewer, Journal of Applied Social Science  
2014-Present

Advisor, Social Ecology Honors Program  
- Principle advisor for an undergraduate Honors Thesis project  
2013-2014

Volunteer, Southern California Forum for Diversity on Graduate Education  
- Assisted with sign placement.  
- Compiled information packets and folders.  
2013

Representative for UCI Graduate Division, FURC Recruitment Trip  
- Invited by the Graduate Division to represent Social and Behavioral Sciences at UCI at the Florida Undergraduate Research Conference hosted by the University of Florida.  
- Attended poster presentations.  
- Distributed recruitment material.  
- Served on a student led panel entitled “Transitioning to Graduate School.”  
2013

Mentor, Competitive Edge Summer Research Program  
- Attended student research presentations and provided feedback.  
- Exchanged emails and met with students to provide support, answer questions, and provide feedback on summer research projects  
2011-2012

Conference Coordination Activities

Co-Planner, Homeless Population Issues  
California State University, Fullerton, CA  
- Involved in planning for Part 1 of a two-part conference on homeless issues in Orange County.  
- Met with planning committee to discuss the geographic and conceptual scope of the conference.  
- Assisted with assembling and finalizing the list of invited speakers.  
- Conceived and drafted the conference mission, goals, and invitation letter.  
2013

Professional Development

Advanced Workshops


“Moving on with NVivo for Mac.” QSR Online Training and Workshops, 2014


Conference Attendance


Professional Affiliations

Urban Affairs Association, 2011-2016


Languages

English: Native Language

Spanish: Advanced Listener, Advanced Speaker, Intermediate Reading and Writing
ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

If You Give a Feast, Invite the Poor: Inviting the Homeless to the Planning Table

By

Jessica Lauren Perez

Doctor of Philosophy in Social Ecology

University of California, Irvine, 2016

Professor Daniel Stokols, Chair

Homeless individuals experience many barriers to accessing and using needed services. However, homeless clients are often excluded from institutional efforts to address their needs. While designing services for the homeless is good, the central argument of this dissertation is that designing services with the homeless is better because it decreases barriers to service use and more effectively addresses the needs of the homeless community. Through an embedded case study conducted in three phases, this dissertation investigated one organization, Lighthouse, engaged in the process of planning a new emergency shelter for the homeless in the face of changing local socio-political priorities. A focus of this study was on how Lighthouse attended to one of their key stakeholder groups during this planning process—the homeless. In the first phase, I examined factors facilitating a successful collaboration between Lighthouse, a nonprofit homeless service provider, and the city where the organization is located. Collaboration resulted in the establishment of legally protected zones for homeless services, enabling Lighthouse to expand its emergency shelter. In the second phase, I compared service provider and service user priorities for emergency shelter to illuminate opportunities for collaboration between these
different stakeholder groups. Finally, serving as a change agent, I proposed to Lighthouse several initiatives intended to promote participation of homeless clients during the planning stages of their new emergency shelter. As a result of these efforts, I highlight four factors that facilitate government-nonprofit and service provider-user collaborations. In addition, I outline organizational factors that facilitate and constrain collaboration between service providers and users. Findings from this work suggest translational guidelines for individuals and organizations interested in successfully involving marginalized groups in local planning and policy processes.
IF YOU GIVE A FEAST, INVITE THE POOR: 
INVITING THE HOMELESS TO THE PLANNING TABLE

The title of this dissertation comes from Luke 14:13-15. By inviting the poor to the feast, Jesus says to his host, “you shall be repaid in the resurrection of the just” (Luke 14:13-15, King James Version). A less divine interpretation of participation also highlights the benefits of giving the poor, or other typically marginalized groups a seat at the planning table. While designing services for the homeless is good, the central argument of this dissertation is that designing services with the homeless is better because it decreases barriers to service use and more effectively addresses the needs of this community.

The homeless experience many barriers to accessing and using services including, but not limited to the following: negative experiences using services (Gelberg, Brownder, Lejano, Elena, & Arangua, 2004; Krausz, Clarkson, Strehlau, Torchalla, Li, & Schuetz, 2013; Ryan & Thompson, 2013); service fragmentation (Blue-Howells, McGuire, & Nakashima, 2000; Power, et al., 1999); and competing priorities or needs (Blue-Howells, McGuire, & Nakashima, 2008; Desai, Mayur & Rosenheck, 2005; Gelberg, Andersen, & Leake, 2000). However, the experiences and perceptions of the users themselves, the homeless clients, are often excluded from conversations and efforts to address their needs. Including the homeless in planning the services they will ultimately use may eliminate some of these barriers. Inclusion also builds individual and community capacity and empowerment, which is particularly useful in the field of homelessness where higher levels of self-efficacy contribute to homeless exits (Epel, Bandura, & Zimbardo, 1999).
Lighthouse\(^1\) has provided services to the homeless in Sunshine County for about 130 years. During an interview with the Director of Business and Operations for Lighthouse he explained that they had been hoping to demolish their current emergency shelter in the city of San Marina because it was “too small, not configured properly, too run down to do what we (Lighthouse) do” (Director of Business and Operations, personal communication, 2012). These plans had been opposed by the city of San Marina until the recent passing of state and city legislation altered the political climate in favor of providing more services to the homeless. This dissertation built and applied a theoretical framework to the examination of Lighthouse’s efforts to plan a new emergency shelter in San Marina in the face of changing policy priorities.

The sections that follow frame the background and context for this dissertation. First, an overview of the organization being studied—Lighthouse—is presented. This overview is followed by a brief review of homelessness and housing in Sunshine County.

**Lighthouse**

An evangelical minister and his wife founded “The Mission” in 1865 (Lighthouse, 2014). Deeply moved by the desire to spread Christianity to the downtrodden, The Mission reached out to prostitutes, alcoholics, gamblers, and the poor in London’s East End. In an attempt to attract more followers, The Mission provided meals, clothing, and other services to their new members. A paramilitary structure was adopted, and in 1878, The Mission officially assumed the name “Lighthouse.” In 1887, a branch of Lighthouse settled in San Marina, Sunshine County, CA. Today, Lighthouse operates shelters, senior programs, worship and rehabilitation centers, and family services offices across the county (Lighthouse, Sunshine County, 2011).

\(^1\) The names of organizations, cities, counties, and people have been changed to protect the identity of involved parties.
Lighthouse in Sunshine County, like all divisions worldwide, is deeply devoted to its organizational mission, which is to “preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination” (Lighthouse, Sunshine County, 2011). Although sources of funding vary by branch, Lighthouse functions mostly on private donations from the community, which are supplemented by a few carefully chosen government grants (Lighthouse’s current shelter, for example, receives aid from FEMA’s Emergency Food and Shelter Program). The decision to limit government funding is due to concerns that the regulations and restrictions attached to it would impede their ability to carry out this mission. Most notably, the Director of Business and Operations communicated this to me—“we tend to shy away from government funding, at least in [Sunshine] County, because we don’t want restrictions on what we do” (Director of Business and Operations, personal communication, 2012). Lighthouse’s desire to protect their mission and function free of interference affects other organizational decisions besides funding, including their willingness to collaborate with outside parties.

Lighthouse has a hierarchical organizational structure. As Figure 1 shows, The Western Territory, whose headquarters are located in Southern California oversee all Lighthouse divisions in 13 western states. Divisional Headquarters, also located in Southern California, oversees all Lighthouse activities in this region. Lighthouse, Sunshine County has a County Coordinator who oversees Lighthouse activities in the County and reports back to Divisional Headquarters. While Lighthouse, Sunshine County has multiple social service divisions, of particular interest to this project is Lighthouse’s Homeless Services Division, which operates out of Haven House, Lighthouse’s emergency shelter. The Director of Social Services for Lighthouse, Sunshine County oversees the Homeless Services Division out of her office in Haven House, and reports

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2 Individuals do not have to be Christian in order to receive services from Lighthouse. Although, depending on the type of service, they may be encouraged to participate in religious or spiritual programming.
to the Director of Business and Operations in Lighthouse, Sunshine County’s administrative offices. Also working under the Homeless Services Division umbrella are the Shelter Manager, Lead Case Manager, and various Haven House staff members and interns.

![Organizational Structure Diagram]

**Figure 1: Organizational Structure**

**Homelessness and Housing in Sunshine County**

On January 22rd, 2011, 6939 homeless individuals were estimated to be residing in Sunshine County, California, 63% of which were homeless men\(^3\). There are three major contributors to the homeless situation in Sunshine County: the high price of rent in the area and the shortage of affordable housing; the competitive job market; and, most relevant to this study, the lack of services available to the homeless. According to Sunshine County 2012 Housing

\(^3\) In order to conceal the real name of the County, this source cannot be included in the reference list.
Inventory Count Report, 2,337 shelter beds⁴ are available year-round in the County (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2012). Only 507 of these beds are for emergency shelter (Lighthouse, internal document, 2013). However, this number is considerably lower than the estimated homeless population.

Traditionally, homeless interventions are structured around a Continuum of Care (CoC) model. This is a plan for services designed to fit the needs of homeless people as they move from almost homeless to a stable housing environment (The Urban Institute, Washington DC, 2002). Ideally, counties or regions coordinate to provide an integrated service system for the homeless beginning with assessment, followed by emergency shelter, transitional housing, and, ultimately, permanent housing (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2009). Emergency shelters often serve as the “point of entry” for the homeless into this service system, as they are meant to provide immediate, safe, and temporary housing to individuals while they search for more permanent options (p.10).

There are six emergency “shelters” in Sunshine County. The largest are the Armories, two cold weather shelters that are open from December to March, depending on funding. These seasonal shelters (one located in San Marina) traditionally accommodate 400 single men and women⁵ ⁶. However, funding for them has been precarious, at best, and they have been slated to close in the next few years (Director of Planning and Building Agency, personal communication, 2012). In November of 2015, Sunshine County supervisors voted to purchase a warehouse in Northern Sunshine County that will hopefully serve as a permanent replacement to the

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⁴ This includes emergency shelters and transitional housing programs.

⁵ In December of 2015, CAL FIRE briefly lowered occupancy rates to 138 persons per location due to fire safety concerns. Full occupancy has since been restored to each location.

⁶ In order to conceal the real name of the city, this source cannot be included in the reference list.
Armories. The third emergency shelter serving only women, Daniel’s Place, operates out of a private residence and accommodates about 70 women a night. However, they are not recognized by the county as a shelter, do not receive government funds, and are strictly word-of-mouth. The fourth shelter is also not technically a shelter, but a church in Northern Sunshine County that allows the homeless to stay for one night only. The fifth shelter is located in Hillside Beach, CA and primarily serves Hillside Beach residents.

Tucked away behind warehouses is Lighthouse’s Haven House, the only permanent, county-wide, county recognized, year-round emergency shelter in Sunshine County. It was built in 1964 to house 36 homeless men (Lighthouse, internal document, 2013). In 1981, the shelter was revised to include additional beds for 16 women, and later 2 families. In 2012, Haven House shifted their focus to provide housing for men only. The shelter, until recently, served 34 men on an emergency basis for 14 days on one side of the shelter. The other side, previously the women’s quarters, accommodated up to 16 male transitional housing clients for anywhere from 30 days to six months (please refer to Figure 2). Over the last 50 years, Haven House program has expanded to accommodate the changing needs of the homeless in Sunshine County. They have since grown beyond the capacity of their original building, which was outdated and in disrepair. Due to the condition of Haven House and the desperate need to supply more emergency shelter, particularly to homeless men, Lighthouse was anxious to build a new, larger facility.

In an interview with the Director of Business and Operations for Lighthouse, he indicated that building a new shelter has been “decades in the making” and that “it was decided long ago

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7 In order to conceal the real name of the city, this source cannot be included in the reference list.
8 Construction began on Haven House in November of 2015. Clients have been relocated to a temporary facility.
that [Lighthouse] needed a bigger, better facility to do what [they] do” (Director of Business and Operations, personal communication, 2012). Upon his joining Lighthouse, the idea to build a new shelter was taken to the San Marina’s city manager whose response, “over my dead body,” squashed any notions of improvement and expansion of Haven House. The political context starved Lighthouse of any opportunity to move forward with their ideas so they involved themselves in other projects. Almost a decade later, these plans would become viable once again (see Chapter Four: The City).

![Figure 2: Haven House Floor Plan. Note: Fuzzy lines indicate doorways.](image-url)
CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research summarized in this section is divided into two parts. First, to provide a general overview of homeless assistance programs (HAPs), national data on service use and the clients that use them are presented. This is followed by a discussion of why some individuals are not using these programs, which highlights the importance of client participation in service planning. In the second part of this review, I describe the conceptual framework used to guide this work. This framework bridges multiple disciplines including organizational studies, social work, political science, psychology, planning and critical systems heuristics. This conceptual framework informs the research questions, hypotheses, methods, and analysis of the data presented in the next chapters.

Part I: Overview

Service Use. The National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients is considered a landmark study in homelessness research (Burt, Aron, Douglas, & Lee, 1999). It was a national, multi-organizational effort to describe homeless assistance programs and the people that use them. This endeavor was funded by 12 federal agencies that formed the Interagency Council on Homelessness. The data were collected by the U.S. Census Bureau and analyzed by the Urban Institute. It captures HAPs and clients in 76 sampling areas. The data for the National Survey of Homeless Providers and Clients was collected in 1996 and there have been many changes to homelessness since then, most notably the large increase in homeless families since the economic recession in 2007. However, its scale and methodological rigor continue to make it one of the best data sources on service use available. It is also extremely unique because it allows for a comparison of sheltered and unsheltered service users. This is
almost impossible to find. In 1999, data from this survey that focused on the individuals using homeless assistance programs was compiled into a report entitled *Homelessness: Programs and the People they Serve*. The following information about service providers and service users comes from that report.

There are over 40,000 HAPs operating in America (Burt, Aron, Douglas, & Lee, 1999). These programs serve a range of populations—from families to single men and women—and services offered—from housing to vouchers; healthcare to food services. Of these programs, 51% are operated by secular non-profits, 34% are operated by faith-based non-profits, and only 14% are run by government agencies. Secular non-profits are more likely to run housing programs, faith based non-profits operate a majority of the food programs, and government agencies operate a majority of health programs. Sources of funding for these programs vary by provider and type of service as food programs are the least likely to receive government funding while more than half of health programs rely solely on government funds. Housing programs fall in between this range as 23% of shelters and other housing programs rely exclusively on private funding sources, 25% rely exclusively on government sources, and the remaining 52% receive funding from both sources.

Homeless individuals using services are mostly male (68%), white non-Hispanic (41%), between the ages of 25 to 54 (80%), have less than a high school education (38%), and are suffering from substance use and/or mental health issues (60%; Burt, Aron, Douglas, & Lee, 1999). A national comparison of sheltered individuals made to Congress in 2011 reveal similar trends (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2012). In 2011, a majority of shelter users were male (63%), white non-Hispanic (39.5%), and between the ages of 31-61 (59.6%). However, these reports highlight a significant increase in homeless families. In 1996,
only 15% of homeless individuals were members of a homeless family (Burt, Aron, Douglas, & Lee, 1999). The proportion of homeless families has more than doubled since (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2012).

One defining characteristic of homelessness is residential instability. Fifty-one percent of homeless clients interviewed had stayed in more than one place in the week prior to their interview (Burt, Aron, Douglas, & Lee, 1999). While 32% of clients had stayed in places not meant for human habitations (on the street), more than twice as many (73%) had stayed in a shelter. Only 11% of clients included in this study reported staying in both shelters and on the streets.

Although there are no major racial or ethnic differences between sheltered and unsheltered clients, a comparison between clients that reported staying exclusively in a shelter or exclusively on the streets for seven days prior to the interviews exposes other demographic differences (Burt, Aron, Douglas, & Lee, 1999). The proportion of men to women is greater on the streets than in a shelter. Thirty-five percent of the shelter population is comprised of women compared to only 14% of the unsheltered population. The sheltered population is also more likely to be homeless for the first time (52% compared to 45%) and for a shorter period of time. Twenty-two percent of the sheltered homeless population had been homeless for six months or less compared to 10% of the unsheltered population. The sheltered population is also more likely than the unsheltered population to be living with a child (16% compared to 3%) and have worked within the last 30 days (47% compared to 39%). Those living on the streets are more likely to have had an alcohol, drug, or mental health problem in the last 30 days (45%, 35%, 44%, respectively compared to 35%, 23%, and 28%) and more likely to be veterans (27%
compared to 23%). These results suggest that sheltered clients have more favorable outcomes than their unsheltered counterparts.

**Barriers to Service Use.** Analysis of the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients of 1996 revealed various services and programs attached to emergency shelters including food pantries, outreach services, voucher distributions, clothing distributions, life skills training, employment assistance, health care, substance abuse treatment, and domestic violence counseling (Burt M., Aron, Lee, & Valente, 2001, p. 296). Despite the increased access to much needed services that using emergency shelter provides, many homeless individuals remain unsheltered. In this section, I will discuss three reasons why homeless individuals do not use shelter that have been cited in the literature: lack of availability, lack of accessibility, and opting out.

One reason why the homeless do not use services is that there are simply not enough services to meet demand. This is especially true of shelter beds, despite the growing recognition of adequate housing as a basic human right (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Drafting Committee, 1948). In a national survey of 29 cities, 70% (19) of cities reported having to turn individuals away from emergency shelter due to lack of beds (The U.S. Conference of Mayors, 2011). The 18 cities that collected data for unmet need averaged a turn away rate of 18%. In one major city, this number was as high as 60%. As stated previously, Sunshine County, CA offers only 2,337 year-round shelter beds for the 6,939 individuals believed to be homeless a night (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2012). Data specifically from Lighthouse indicates that in 2012-2013, they served 897 unduplicated men and turned away as many as 849 due to lack of beds (Lighthouse, internal document, 2013).
Even when services are available to the homeless they are often not accessible. Perceived barriers have been shown to be a powerful predictor in blocking a positive behavior change (Graham & Pace, 2008), such as seeking shelter. While there is limited literature available that specifically addresses barriers to shelter use, there is extensive research on the barriers the homeless face when trying to access medical or mental health services independent of shelter providers. Overall, barriers to seeking services can be categorized in two ways: institution-related and patient-related (Blue-Howells, McGuire, & Nakashima, 2008).

Institution-related barriers refer to high costs, limited services, or negative provider attitudes towards the homeless. A major institutional barrier to obtaining services that is discussed in the literature is service fragmentation (Blue-Howells et al., 2008; Power, et al., 1999; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2010). It stems from an uncoordinated and disjointed social service system where services are spread across a large geographic area with different admission processes and requirements for each (Blue-Howells et al., 2008). The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) described that the way social services are often organized would be difficult for even an experienced service provider to manage and impedes the homeless’ access and attainment of helpful services and benefits (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2010).

Patient-related barriers include lack of insurance, transportation, or personal distrust of providers. An example of this is the idea of competing priorities or needs (Blue-Howells et al., 2008; Gelberg et al., 2000; Gelberg et al., 1997). This is when the homeless prioritize basic needs like food, safety and finding a bathroom and have little time or resources left to obtain other services. Although this concept is often discussed as a barrier to seeking health services, because of other barriers like service fragmentation (Blue-Howells et al., 2008; Power, et al.,
1999; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2010), locating a shelter with attainable entrance requirements and vacancies may expend as many resources as searching for appropriate health care services. Although less prevalent in the literature, research also exposed a large social component to staying unsheltered for young adults (Ryan & Thompson, 2013). In this study, individuals did not seek housing because they did not want to leave a partner on the street, felt it would betray their street family, or felt safer surrounded by friends on the street than strangers in a program.

A final patient-related barrier cited by several studies is negative experiences using services (Gelberg, Brownder, Lejano, Elena, & Arangua, 2004; Krausz et al., 2013; Ryan & Thompson, 2013). Negative experiences, past dissappointments with services, or poor treatment from staff deter homeless individuals from seeking services again in the future (Gelberg et al., 2004; Ryan & Thompson, 2013). Instead these individuals choose to opt out from that particular service and, sometimes, the social service system as a whole.

There are several reasons why an individual may choose to opt out of using services, such as emergency shelter, when possible. One reason is the indignity that the homeless experience using services. Miller and Keys (2001) explain that the loss experienced when entering homelessness—loss of home, possessions, routine, stability—is socially stigmatizing and that being homeless can threaten a person’s sense of human dignity and self-worth. The authors present a number of negative events that have been cited in the literature as common homeless experiences while using services that can compromise an individual’s dignity including being treated impersonally by staff; having little privacy in sleeping or bathroom areas; being required to attend religious services or follow strict rules of conduct in exchange for services; and having to wait in long lines to be served. Interviews with 24 homeless individuals about their
experiences using services revealed other events that threatened an individual’s dignity: lack of individual identity such as being treated like a number or a child; being treated differently or unfairly because of their homeless status; lack of care or support; lack of resources provided for basic needs such as clothing or food; and a negative physical environment such as a shelter that seemed dirty or poorly lit. The consequences of these negative experiences can be anger, feelings of worthlessness, and depression. As a result, some individuals attempt to avoid these experiences by abstaining from service use, to the extent that they can.

Hoffman and Coffey (2008) referenced a database of over 500 transcribed interviews on homeless experiences and identified two common types of responses individuals had interacting with organizations and their staff: objectification and infantilization (pg. 208). The author’s describe these experiences as coming from the perceived attitude that “providers know best.” Homeless individuals describe feeling like numbers, children, or not fully recognized, respected adults. Most of these individuals coped by opting out of the social service system. Avoiding these services allowed them to preserve their dignity because it was “just not worth” seeking the help (pg 215). Opting out of services, the authors contend, not only replenishes dignity and self-worth, but also provides a sense of agency.

The literature available emphasizes the complexity of service use. It may be common knowledge that demand for homeless assistance programs (HAPs) exceeds the supply. However less known is the struggle individuals face when trying to secure services even when they are available. When services are secured, individuals have reported experiencing dehumanization to the point of preferring to remain unserved. It is clear that attempts to address the availability of HAPs and not the process of attaining them or their quality are not enough. A possible solution proposed here to address process and quality concerns is a concerted and legitimate effort to
encourage homeless individuals to be more involved in service design and delivery. The next section of this literature will demonstrate that although the homeless arguably have the biggest “stake” in the success of HAPs, they have historically been left out of planning processes, despite growing evidence that suggests mutual benefits for organizations and individuals involved in participatory efforts.

**Part 2: Conceptual Framework**

*Identifying Stakeholders.* The term “stakeholder” has gained prominence in public and nonprofit theory in the last 40 years. Although it is believed to be useful to attend to stakeholder concerns while planning and implementing a new project, the literature on how to practically identify and manage stakeholder involvement is sparse (Achterkamp & Vos, 2007; Bryson, 2004; ). A key issue is that the term itself presents semantic challenges. Bryson (2004) notes that many definitions for “stakeholder” have been proposed, ranging in their broadness and inclusiveness, and lists several examples. For instance Nutt and Backoff (1992) define a stakeholders as any party that can affect of be affected by organizational activities (pg 439; as cited in Bryson, 2004). However, Eden and Ackermann (1998) contend that only entities with the power to change organizational strategy can be considered stakeholders (as cited in Bryson, 2004). The former definition encourages participation from a range of individuals while the latter leaves room for a narrow few. Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997) also present an exhaustive list of definitions of stakeholders making a clear distinction between narrow and broad views of stakeholders. Narrow views are based on the reality of limited resources, time, and the patience required to juggle external constraints. A broad definition accommodates the reality that organizations can be significantly affected by or affect almost anyone (pg. 857).

How an organization defines their stakeholders is an important decision, affecting who is
included, what role they will play in the organization, and organizational activities. As a result, the decision of who is considered to have a stake in the organization is not only a logistical issue, but a political and ethical one (Bryson, 2004). Although there have been multiple attempts to group or classify stakeholders, Mitchell et. al. (1997) suggests a classification based on how decision-makers choose and attend to stakeholders. They argue that stakeholders are grouped together based on three attributes: power or an actor’s ability to carry out their own will or encourage a desired outcome; legitimacy or the belief that an actor’s claim to participate is appropriate based on a system of social norms; and urgency or the degree to which an actor’s claim is compelling or calls for immediate attention. Stakeholder salience is, therefore, positively related to the number of attributes perceived by decision-makers. In other words, the more attributes an actor possesses or accumulates, the more priority their claims will receive from an organization.

One relevant caveat to note in this explanation of salience is that power plays a particularly important role in how decision-makers attend to stakeholders (Mitchell et. al, 1997). According to this explanation, actors possessing legitimacy and urgency but lacking power are classified as dependent. Stakeholders who are dependent require the advocacy of more powerful actors for their claims to be satisfied. Therefore, actors lacking legitimacy or urgency can gain these qualities by wielding their power on behalf of others, whose claims they believe are meritorious. However, those lacking power must appeal to more powerful actors to advocate for their cause. As a result, parties without power, even if those who are powerful adopt them, can hope to gain representation but not direct involvement. This scenario is particularly problematic to traditionally underrepresented groups, like the poor, who may possess legitimacy and urgency but almost always lack power.
**Conceptualizations of Poverty.** In the United States, conceptualizations of poverty differ from Europe and the developing world (Iceland, 2013). According to Iceland, policies historically employed in the U.S. surrounding poverty reflect a “market orientation and individualistic ethos” and represent a struggle between providing aid and discouraging socially “undesirable” behavior (pg. 130). These policies are rooted in the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601, which describe only certain classes, or ”worthy” poor, as serving under the purview of government aid. Sarbin (1970) builds on this discrete characterization of the poor to define a subculture of the degraded poor, which he refers to as culture of poverty. He argues that the degraded poor, individuals assigned a “negatively valued identity” (p. 32), are distinct from other poor and low-income individuals. Stigmatizing certain individuals in poverty can be explained, at least in part, to Lerner’s just world theory (Stokols & Schopler, 1973; Lerner & Miller, 1978). This theory states that people, usually unconsciously, blame victims for their own misfortune rather than believe that the world is an unjust, disorderly place.

Poverty policy in the U.S. often refer to “economic, or income, deprivation” and use absolute measures to determine a basic needs standard in order to survive on a day-to-day basis (Iceland, 2013, pg. 23). More relative measures for defining poverty that consider societal fluctuations in economic, social, and cultural development, have not been adopted domestically in part because they serve as a “moving target” (pg. 30). As such, it is difficult to reach a consensus on how to conceptualize these measures and to design policies to adequately address them. Results of a comparison of four different poverty measures using data spanning from 1947-2011 reveal that poverty rates are lowest when using the U.S. official poverty measure (absolute measure; on average 15%) and highest when using a relative measure (on average 19.5%; pg. 36).
Although poverty has traditionally been defined and measured economically in terms of income or consumption, the work of anthropologists and planners in developing countries has expanded the conceptualization of poverty to include social dimensions (Wratten, 1995). One such dimension is social exclusion, a concept developed by French sociologists (Bhalla & Lapeyre, 1997). Originally viewed as a failure of the state to protect societal cohesion, social exclusion was interpreted by Anglo-Saxon thinkers as resulting from freely chosen relationships, individual choices, or systemic distortions like discrimination. This reimagining is in alignment with the long-standing tradition of assigning blame to the poor, attributing poverty to individual insufficiencies (Wasserman & Clair, 2010).

The European Commission emphasizes that social exclusion occurs when citizens, due to disadvantage, are unable to secure social rights such as a basic standard of living and participation in traditional societal institutions—education, employment, healthcare, and housing (Bhalla & Lapeyre, 1997). Social exclusion, like poverty itself, is thus a multi-dimensional concept, encompassing economic, social, and political aspects of life.

The economic approach to social exclusion says that certain individuals cannot access essential goods and services, are prohibited from employment and the labor market, and as a result, basic needs such as shelter, health, and education (Bhalla & Lapeyre, 1997). The social approach to exclusion says that with employment and the ability to provide basic needs for oneself comes human dignity, the prerequisites for full citizenship, and a productive role in society. Therefore, being excluded from the labor market reduces one’s social value and ability to participate in decision making in social groups. While the social approach to exclusion is complex, Bhalla and Lapeyre (1997) outline three main types of exclusion: from social services such as health and education, the labor market, and the opportunity to participate in traditional
Social institutions.

Social exclusion also encompasses a political dimension, which is concerned with certain groups being denied human and political rights (Bhalla and Lapeyre, 1997). These rights include, personal security, rule of law, freedom of expression, political participation, equity of opportunity, trade union or freedom of association rights, and participation in the democratic process in general (pg. 420). This dimension is crucial to the understanding of the experiences of the impoverished, who have historically been excluded from participating in many political processes (Beresford & Croft, 1995; Boone, 1972).

**Citizen Participation.** Gamble and Weil (1995) define citizen participation as “the active, voluntary involvement of individuals and groups to change problematic conditions in poor communities, and influence the policies and programs that affect the quality of their lives or the lives of other residents” (as appears in Ohmer & Beck, 2006, p.180). This practice originated with urban renewal projects starting in the 1950’s. The Housing Act of 1954 mandated that in order for communities to qualify for federal redevelopment aid, they had to provide a “workable program” for eliminating and preventing blight (Johnstone, 1958, p. 337). Although the act, itself, was vague, the Housing and Home Finance Agency outlined seven requirements for a workable program. One of these requirements, citizen participation, was to ensure the acceptance and adoption of the plan.

Citizen participation during urban renewal was most often achieved through citizen advisory committees. However, Van Til and Van Til (1970) contend that most of these committees were comprised of elite citizens who championed the replacement of low-income housing with other redevelopment projects. In response to these attacks on low-income housing, members from these communities organized to oppose plans to “renew” their neighborhoods. As
non-elite groups became more organized, forcing their way into political processes they had originally been excluded from, they began to gain veto power. As a result, non-elites were invited to serve as citizen advisors, but their participation was rare and limited to projects where their neighborhoods would be renovated and not cleared.

In the 1960’s during the War on Poverty, the practice of citizen participation expanded to recruit poor community members (Boone, 1972; Van Til & Van Til, 1970). There were several socio-political factors that influenced the rise of the poor in citizen participation including the civil rights movement. Another factor was feedback obtained from impoverished communities obtained during the President’s Study Group on a National Service Corps regarding citizen desires to plan and implement anti-poverty programs themselves. Finally, the Kennedy Administration’s commitment to programming that “helped people help themselves” lent itself to the adoption of citizen participation (Boone, 1972, pg. 447). The idea, which was revolutionary at the time, was that the sheer act of participating, could be enough to develop capacity and to lift individuals out of poverty

During this time, federal legislation was coming under question for being too far removed from the people affected by it. Local governments and even private agencies serving the poor were also charged with neglecting those they were meant to protect. New, local, nonprofit structures were created to address these concerns and codified into law by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Boone, 1972). This act called for “maximum feasible participation” by way of “community action programs” (Boone, 1972, pg. 444). These community action programs were ideally comprised of public officials, private service agencies, and representatives of the local poor and allowed local community groups to allocate federal resources to poverty relief efforts.
While the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 was meant to revolutionize how programs combating poverty plan and deliver services to the poor, Van Til and Van Til (1970) contend that the failure of this Act to define a precise role for the poor in these efforts led to ambiguity about several aspects of citizen participation. Ultimately, the authors contend, empowering the poor was not supported by middle class professionals who oversaw the existing services for the poor or by local officials. However, elites argued that the threat of providing too much power to the poor came from leaders, particularly in the black community and other minority groups, who were using the participation of the poor as a campaign platform. Also, in order to form coalitions representing the interests of the poor, a period of organizing these community members was required. As a result, this type of organization was more often discussed than actually achieved. Due to strong opposition by elites and the difficulties poor people faced in organizing, more traditional participation methods including elite-only coalitions as well as some mixed coalitions dominated in the War on Poverty.

Benefits of Involving the Affected. The complex nature of today’s most pressing social problems begs for solutions reached through collaborative efforts (Bronstein, 2003; Bryson, 2004). Bryson (2004) contends that due to the interconnected nature of the world, “no [one] organization contains [a social problem]” (pg. 23). Instead, any public problem encompasses many individuals, groups, and organizations. Bringing these groups together, with various areas of expertise, inspires more creative solutions than unilateral thinking alone (Bronstein, 2003).

One important group that should be included in producing real-world solutions is whom Ulrich (1987) calls “the affected.” In Critical Heuristics for Social Systems Design, Ulrich states an obvious but often overlooked fact—when applied science actually gets applied, it affects
individuals that were not involved in the creation of it. In his work, he distinguishes between those making decision—the involved—and those that bear the consequences of those decisions—the affected. Ulrich argues that all those affected should be involved in decision making, especially in projects serving the public domain (Achterkamp & Vos, 2007). He also develops a checklist that the affected can use to question the involved’s underlying assumptions when they are making decisions about social systems (Ulrich, 1987).

Innes and Boher (2004) argue that traditional methods of public participation, such as public hearings, are ineffective and actually discourage community members from participating in these processes. The authors hope to reframe public participation by proposing that participation should be more collaborative, include all stakeholders, and have two-way communication between these groups. They contend that planners, being out of touch with local community needs, and community members, being unaware of political and economic constraints, function better together to solve community problems.

Research has uncovered benefits for organizations engaging in more collaborative efforts such as organizational legitimacy, the development of more effective policies and services, and more responsive service delivery, which reduces the likelihood of making costly changes to program design after implementation (LeRoux, 2009). Another organizational benefit is more successful decision making. Nutt (1999), for example, has concluded that half of all decisions made by organizations are abandoned due to failure. One reason for this includes failure to adopt commonly known, effective tactics, such as eliciting participation from key stakeholders and individuals who are affected by organizational decisions. Only 18% of the 386 organizations the author studied used participation. Managers did not use participation as a strategy because they found it difficult to use, time consuming, and did not want to surrender
control. However, the author found that managers who did implement this strategy actually gained control and had 80% of decisions sustained.

Nutt’s (1999) research has also uncovered four types of participation based on degrees of involvement. The first, *token participation*, is when a few affected individuals are given limited involvement such as administering a survey. *Delegated participation* often uses board members and managers in a strategic planning group to offer solutions to organizational problems. *Complete participation* involves all stakeholders on a task force to be included in some aspect of a decision. Finally, *comprehensive participation*, entails the inclusion of all stakeholders in finding organizational problems and offering solutions. Token and delegated participation were the least successful types of participation, resulting in 70% and 80% sustained use of decisions made with these tactics, respectively. Complete participation had a 100% sustained use for organizations that employed this tactic while comprehensive participation was never used.

These findings demonstrate that including key stakeholders and affected individuals in decision-making increases organizational success. Also, inclusion can be conceptualized as a continuum, ranging from survey administration to accounting for and attending to all stakeholders during decision-making. As a result, these findings suggest the greater the attempt to equalize power between stakeholders, the more successful organizations will be.

Along with gains to the organization, individuals being invited to participate experience benefits from doing so. LeRoux (2009) was interested in discerning what happens to democratic participation as the amount of private organizations, such as non-profits, delivering government funded social services continues to rise. After a broad sweep of the literature, she notes multiple benefits citizens receive from participation including the development of personal democratic identity and citizenship, feelings of empowerment, and fostering meaningful societal
Contributions.

**Conceptual Model.** This dissertation applied the theoretical constructs described in the previous section to the examination of client participation in organizational planning and implementation of HAPs. Figure 1, below, is a conceptual model of how these constructs were integrated to provide an enhanced understanding of this process. I assert that clients, current and prospective, are and should be considered key stakeholders in service provision. Nutt and Backoff’s (1992) definition of stakeholders as those that can affect or are affected by organizational activities supports this assertion (pg 439; as cited in Bryson, 2004). In this case, the involved should attend to the homeless, i.e., the affected, as they would any other key stakeholder. This more inclusive definition is also aligned with Lighthouse’s Social Services Division’s vision to “empower the homeless, oppressed, captive, and broken poor in [Sunshine] County” (Lighthouse, internal document, 2013).

Following Mitchell et. al’s (1997) classification of salience, stakeholders are attended to based on power, legitimacy, and urgency. The issue of power, in this case, is particularly relevant as this theory suggests that those without power are dependent on those that possess it. Inspired by Ulrich (1987), stakeholders are divided into two groups—the involved and the affected—in the model below. Because they possess power, legitimacy, and urgency, Lighthouse make up the involved. The homeless lack of power and are perceived to have illegitimate claims to involvement. This is compounded by historic underrepresentation and social exclusion. Because of their low salience, the homeless have been, up to this point, merely the affected. However, both groups are qualified to participate in the process of planning this new shelter, as shown in the model below. Lighthouse is an expert in providing homeless services and has the
resources and authority to do so. The homeless are experts in using services and must continue to do so in order for the new shelter to be viable.

LeRoux (2009) contends that when citizens participate in the creation of services, there can be multiple benefits for the organization including increased organizational success, legitimacy, and sustainability. LeRoux (2009) also states that citizens benefit from participation through empowerment. I contend that homeless participation may also decrease barriers, leading to an enhanced user experience and less opting out. In the model, these benefits appear as products of participation. These products of participation can positively affect the new shelter, Lighthouse, and the local homeless community (as shown by the dark orange, dashed lines). The dashed lines signify that participation of the homeless is still uncertain.

Figure 3: Conceptual Model of Theoretical Constructs
Research Questions

This dissertation explores how one organization—Lighthouse—plans a new emergency shelter for the homeless. A focus of this study was how this organization attends to one of their key stakeholders during this planning process—the homeless. This dissertation is comprised of three data chapters. Each chapter’s aims, research questions, and hypotheses are described below.

The City. The local political climate has had a profound effect on the evolution of the new shelter project. As such, an investigation of this planning process is incomplete without an understanding of contextual factors that have influenced its development over time. In The City, I analyzed the socio-political factors that facilitated Lighthouse’s shelter planning process. This chapter used Kingdon’s theory of agenda setting (1995) to address the following research questions: (1) What factors contributed to the establishment of the ordinance? (2) What factors, if any, hindered the establishment of the ordinance? Who were the key stakeholders involved in determining its content? (3) How were stakeholder views reflected in the final document? (4) How were the homeless’ interests represented in this ordinance?

The literature above guides the formulation of three hypotheses. Stakeholder theory suggests that stakeholders are attended to based on their power, legitimacy, and urgency. A historical look at participation of the poor reveals that those who lack political power or clout are often suppressed by those that have power and clout. Therefore, I would expect that the key stakeholders involved in determining the content for this ordinance will, at the very least, possess power, but, most likely possess all three criteria. As a result, because the homeless lack power and possibly legitimacy, I hypothesize that this population was not considered a key stakeholder or directly involved in the formulation of this ordinance. However, earlier research suggests that
those in power may advocate on behalf of those that lack power. I expect that the interests of the homeless were represented indirectly by advocates with power who participated in this project.

**The Affected.** The homeless, as users of emergency shelter, have acquired experiences that make them uniquely qualified to comment on emergency shelter planning and implementation. As stakeholder theory suggests, these qualifications give the homeless urgency and in some contexts legitimacy (Mitchel et. al., 1997). The aim of The Affected is to determine how the homeless would plan for and deliver emergency shelter, if they had the power to do so.

*Chapter Five: The Affected*, will address the following research questions: (1) What are the homeless’ experiences using emergency shelter? (2) What do the homeless like about emergency shelter? (3) What do the homeless dislike about emergency shelter? (4) Based on their experiences using Haven House and other local shelters, what recommendations would the homeless make for improved service delivery? The answers to these questions will be compared to Lighthouse’s plans for their new emergency shelter. Client and provider perspectives will be incorporated into a model for service delivery, entitled *Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter*. This model incorporates feedback from the involved and the affected and will be used to highlight the similarities and differences between priorities for ideal emergency shelter. This model will also highlight important opportunities for collaboration between these two groups.

**The Involved.** For this chapter, I served as a change agent to encourage Lighthouse—the involved—to embrace a more collaborative planning process that includes participation from homeless clients—the affected. I address the following questions: (1) What factors facilitate client participation? (2) What factors constrain client participation in this process?

Due to the homeless’ lack of power, the established tradition of excluding the poor from decision making, and Nutt’s (1999) findings that organizations refrain from participatory
practices, earlier research suggests that the homeless will continue to play the role of the “affected” and rarely cross over to the role of the “involved” in planning for the new shelter. LeRoux’s (1999) findings that more established organizations and those that dependlargly on private donations, racially misrepresent their clientele, and are religiouslyaffiliated are less likely to engage in certain forms of participation, also support this prediction. However, I hypothesize that the introduction of a change agent in this situation will result in attempts to involve the affected, especially when there is a clear organizational benefit to doing so.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the methods used to address the central research question—to what degree are the homeless given a seat at the planning table?—and more specific research questions described in Chapter Two. This section will begin with a description of my role as a change agent, followed by a description of the research design, and a discussion of how I gained access to the organization of interest—Lighthouse. Following these sections is a brief presentation of preliminary data and a discussion of three research phases, each of which contains its own distinct research questions, research sites, research participants, data collection methods, and analysis strategy.

My Role as a Change Agent

Individual passions drive research. As Werner, Brown, and Altman (2002) contend, a researcher’s interest and background are reflected in the commencement of a research project and subsequent research questions (pg 210). I am deeply committed to the homeless community of Sunshine County and believe that they should have a say in the services they receive. As a volunteer and past employee of Lighthouse, I became intimately familiar with the organization and the individuals that work there. As a result of my relationship with Lighthouse and the homeless community, my objectivity was affected. At the same time, my involvement with this organization over the last five years has shaped my insider status and afforded me access to many organizational processes that are otherwise not open to an outsider. I have also gained the trust of the individuals working within this organization.

My goal for this project was not to be an objective researcher observing a process. My goal was to be a change agent in the process and to serve as an ally for a typically marginalized and underrepresented population. I used Saegert’s (1987) transformative synthesis model of
social change as a guide to achieving this goal. In this model, the researcher is embedded in the knowing and changing of socioenvironmental transactions. The transactional model violates certain standards held in scientific practice because it both recognizes and allows for the researcher’s individual interests in pursuing the study. This model requires researchers to state their biases upfront; examine the personal interests and assumptions that led to the formation of research questions; and understand the context surrounding the problem in order to be involved in decision making. Finally, the transformative model asserts that the researcher is a person first and a researcher second. As a result, researchers can use moral and subjective criteria for evaluating research decisions. Werner, Brown, and Altman (2002) support this final point by noting that there are many ways of conducting an analysis, therefore a researcher must exercise their own best judgment in selecting research strategies (pg 218).

The transformative synthesis model of social change served as an ideal model for this dissertation. It provided a guide for active involvement in the process studied. This model supports sharing knowledge gained from previous work with the homeless community and facilitating a dialogue between this organization and the clients they serve. Information sharing and active engagement is not usually an aim in more traditional approaches that advocate for researcher detachment from the subject of study. However, an active exchange of information, ideas, and values is crucial in this project. The social ecological model promotes applied research that solves community problems. I do not conduct research for research’s sake, but to make people’s lives better. One goal for this project was to use the previously described theoretical framework to examine how an organization designs services for the homeless. It was also my goal to illuminate an organization’s decision making regarding participation. Most importantly, though, it was my hope to encourage Lighthouse to be more inclusive of their
clients’ perspective and experiences to eliminate some of the barriers to service use discussed in Chapter Two. All of these research goals are permitted and encouraged within this model.

**Study Design**

To accomplish the research goals outlined in the previous chapter, I conducted an embedded case study of Lighthouse. According to Yin (2011), a case study is an appropriate research method for a study when the researcher is concerned with “whys” and “hows;” control over behavioral events is not required; and there is a focus on contemporary events. Because of the descriptive nature of this project; natural, uncontrollable setting; and aim to understand an unfolding process, this study met all three criteria for a case study approach.

An embedded case study design is appropriate when a study has more than one unit of analysis embedded within the case (Yin, 2011). In this study, the city of San Marina, where Haven House is located—specifically, the local political climate—served as the context in which my case—Lighthouse—was situated. Furthermore, I studied a specific organizational process around a particular project—the creation of the new emergency shelter. Therefore, the new shelter project was a subunit housed within the larger case. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of my conceptualization of a case study approach. In this figure, the smallest unit of analysis, the project, is embedded within the larger case, which is embedded in the greater political context of the city, county, and state. As Yin (2011) points out, the dotted lines represent the reality that the divisions between case and context, subunit and case, are not always distinct.
San Marina was chosen as the setting for this project for several reasons. The first is that it houses the largest homeless population in Sunshine County\(^9\). A second, related reason is that it houses more social services than any other city in Sunshine County (Mayor of San Marina, personal communication, 2013). Finally, after years of non-compliance with Lighthouse’s request for a new shelter, San Marina was considered to be the most proactive and transparent city in Sunshine County in planning a local ordinance, which satisfied Senate Bill 2 mandates (SB2; signed into law in 2007 and requiring cities to take greater efforts to provide services to their homeless community). This opinion was given most notably by the Director of ShelterAid, an organization that helps build shelters for the homeless, on public record at a September 3, 2013 San Marina city council meeting. He stated, “I have heard dialogues in many cities... No one has taken this more seriously than the city of [San Marina], or has been as public. Some

\(^{9}\) In order to conceal the real name of the county, this source cannot be included in the reference list.
cities follow the letter of the law but not the spirit of it.” These circumstances created an ideal environment in which to study the creation of new services for the homeless.

Lighthouse was also chosen as my “case” for several reasons. Lighthouse has provided services to the people of Sunshine County for about 130 years (Lighthouse, Sunshine County, 2011). Lighthouse’s Haven House, has been operating as a homeless shelter for the last 50 years (Lighthouse, internal document, 2013). Lighthouse is considered an expert in the field of homeless services provision by San Marina city planners (Director of Planning and Building Agency, personal communication, 2013) and, as such, was used as a consultant when constructing the local ordinance (briefly described above and the subject of Chapter Four). Despite a brief period of collaboration, Lighthouse had a turbulent history with San Marina in regards to expanding their homeless services. These factors, alone, made this organization a unique point of study. However, coupled with these factors is a tradition of privacy. According to Yin (2011), there are several conditions that justify the use of a single case in a research design. One of these, is the use of a revelatory case, or a case that allows a researcher to observe a phenomenon that has been previously inaccessible to social science inquiry. Lighthouse’s desire to protect their organizational and spiritual mission has often guarded them from outside partnerships and transparency. As a result, this project provided an interesting opportunity to access an organizational process that may otherwise be unknown to outsiders.

Access

When I first arrived in Sunshine County and began studying homelessness, I was committed to gaining experiential knowledge in the field. I was interested in learning about the homeless population in Sunshine County and the kinds of services available to them. In the summer of 2010, I began volunteering at Haven House. At the time, Haven House had a very
small social service staff that was comprised of the Director of Social Services for Lighthouse and a lead case manager that provided services to the emergency shelter guests, clients in two on-site transitional housing programs, families at two off-site transitional housing locations, and any individual that called the offices in need of help. So, I jumped right in doing whatever was needed as an office assistant and volunteer case manager. I volunteered about 16 hours a week and averaged about 7 clients until June of 2011 when Haven House’s lead case manager left. I was asked to fill this position until Lighthouse could find a permanent case manager.

For the next four months I was a paid employee of Lighthouse. I went through a short training, increased my hours to 25 per week, and my client list almost doubled. During this time, I was also visiting Lighthouse during days off to work on my first research project for them—a process evaluation of their two on-site transitional housing programs. This research became my second year project and the foundation for a publication. In October of 2011, I trained the new lead case manager and took a small break from my work with Lighthouse.

In late November of 2011, I was asked to meet with the then County Coordinator of Lighthouse. He and I met, along with my previous supervisor, the Director of Social Services and I was asked to study women’s underutilization of Haven House due to a perceivably low demand for shelter on the women’s side. At the time, they were deciding what population they could best serve if they opened a new emergency shelter. Because of my history with the organization and research interests, the County Coordinator thought I would be the most appropriate person to shed light on this issue. At this meeting, I was also granted permission to access any Lighthouse files or data that I needed for this or future research. From March of 2012 through February of 2013, I interviewed 39 sheltered and unsheltered women across four research sites to discern why homeless women in Sunshine County were underutilizing
emergency shelter. This research became the subject of my third year breadth requirement and an additional publication.

Lighthouse underwent major changes during the year that I was collecting data for this project. In June of 2012, Lighthouse closed briefly due to staffing issues and decided to reopen to serve men only. This decision was made in large part because of the structural limitations of the building. However, the Director of Social Services informed me that Lighthouse was considering serving only men in their new facility, as well (see Chapter Four: The City for more details about the decision to serve only men).

During this time, the County Coordinator who had granted me access to the organization left suddenly and was replaced by two interim County Coordinators from Lighthouse’s Divisional Headquarters in Southern California. As a result, I went through a very formal, lengthy procedure to re-secure access for this dissertation project. This included submitting a research proposal. In my proposal, I detailed my desire to study Lighthouse’s organizational process around the creation of the new emergency shelter. I did not discuss my additional research interests of observing how inclusive their planning process was and encouraging more homeless participation in their process. I decided to withhold this information because I believed full knowledge of my interests might change how Lighthouse planned their new emergency shelter moving forward. This proposal was sent to Divisional Headquarters and then Territorial Headquarters. After five months, both legal departments determined that my research did not qualify as “human subjects” research and that I just needed to secure permission from the County Coordinator. Finally, I secured permission from the permanent Lighthouse, Sunshine County Coordinator on September 3, 2013.
After three and a half years of volunteer work, paid work, fieldwork, three completed research projects, and three changes in leadership I was able to gain access to an organizational process that would otherwise be unknown to an outsider. Unfortunately, over time, the permanent County Coordinator began to question the need for my attendance at certain Lighthouse planning meetings, specifically Advisory Board Meetings. I received an email on February 14, 2014 from the Director of Social Services and my gatekeeper to the organization, asking me to send him proof of permission from Divisional and Territorial Headquarters and more details about the project. On June 6, 2014, after several attempts to contact him over the course of two months, the County Coordinator denied my request to give a 3-5 minute presentation on the organizational benefits on incorporating client participation to the Advisory Board, despite having three board member endorsements for the presentation. Instead, he asked me to discuss the information in Program Committee meetings and that the Chair of the Program Committee could decide to share any relevant information to the rest of the Advisory Board. On November 4, 2014, the Director of Social Services informed me that the County Coordinator did not want me attending Advisory Board meetings. Because I did not want to compromise access to Program Committee Meetings, I obliged.

Preliminary Study

This dissertation was inspired, in part, by a previous project that I completed at the request of a previous Lighthouse County Coordinator. In 2012, Lighthouse was making some preliminary decisions regarding service delivery for their new shelter. At that time, Haven House had accommodated both men and women; however, they noticed a trend in women underutilizing emergency shelter. Despite the disparity between the number of available beds and the amount of women in need, Haven House was at 66% capacity on the women’s side in
2010. In contrast, between 2012-2013, Haven House served 897 unduplicated men and turned away 849 due to lack of available beds (Lighthouse, internal document, 2013). As stated above, because of my previous position as a case manager at Haven House, intimate knowledge of their program, and prior experience researching their programs, I was contacted by the previous County Coordinator to investigate this observed trend in shelter under-use among homeless women. The purpose of the investigation was to determine whether Lighthouse should shift from a multi-gender facility to a male-focused facility.

Over the course of a year, I interviewed 39 homeless women, both sheltered and unsheltered, across four research sites about their experiences using services for the homeless in Sunshine County. These interviews revealed that the perceived barriers associated with seeking shelter hindered women’s ability to successfully attain it (Perez, 2014). Barriers occurred on individual, intrapersonal, organizational, and local policy levels. Some examples include negative past experiences at a shelter, pressure to stay with a partner on the street, unprofessional staff at shelters, and failure of local agencies to affectively communicate with the homeless community. For a list of benefits and barriers, please refer to Figure 2.
As a result of staffing issues, facilities restrictions, and apparent demand, in June of 2012 Haven House was converted to a men’s shelter. Lighthouse also decided to serve exclusively men at their new shelter. Based on this shift in priorities, I conducted focus groups with guests at Haven House. While interviews with women explored experiences using services for the homeless, the focus groups with 28 men were more targeted to experiences using Haven House. These interviews revealed barriers to using emergency shelter effectively including the failure of organizations to provide a cohesive range of services that helped men transition out of homelessness. Instead, they found themselves cycling in and out of the same programs—namely emergency shelters—without ever having enough time or tools to acquire what they needed to graduate to more stable sources of housing. For more details about men’s focus groups, please refer to Chapter Six: The Involved.
The results from both of these investigations revealed that even when services were available to the homeless, they could not effectively access them. I contend that a major reason for this is the failure of entities planning and providing services to consult with service users during the design, planning, and implementation of these programs. The data collected in these studies contributed to a model for service delivery entitled *Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter*. This model, along with the experiences of services users that contributed to it, is described in more detail in *Chapter Five: The Affected*.

**The Research Plan: The Three Phases**

In this section I present the methods used for answering the questions posed in the previous chapter. Because this dissertation involves the study of a multi-layered process evolving over time, I divided my efforts into three phases, which are represented as three distinct chapters. The research sites, participants, data collection strategies, and analysis will be discussed in relation to each corresponding phase.

**Phase I: The City.** For this phase, I analyzed and described the political context that affected Lighthouse’s planning process for their new emergency shelter. I included any factor that I believed had a direct effect on Lighthouse’s plans for their new shelter. This included organizational, city, county, and even state efforts to address homelessness, Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY) sentiments which hindered the creation of homeless programs across Sunshine County, and any collaborations that may have occurred around the planning or creation of homeless programs. I focused largely on the creation and approval of Ordinance No. NS-2848, which granted Lighthouse permission to expand their current shelter by right.

The methods employed during this phase answered the following research questions: (1) What factors contributed to the establishment of the ordinance? (2) What factors, if any, hindered
the establishment of the ordinance? (3) Who were the key stakeholders involved in determining its content? (4) How were stakeholder views reflected in the final document? (5) How were the homeless’ interests represented in this ordinance?

**Data Sources.** The data for this chapter was derived from multiple sources (please refer to Appendix A for a complete listing). The majority of the data came from observations made at planning meetings relevant to the ordinance, including a forum held for the property holders in the affected zone, planning commission and city council meetings where the ordinance was on the agenda, and a private meeting between San Marina city planners and Lighthouse administrative staff which defined the motivations and roles for their collaborative partnership. Attendance at these meetings took place largely between June 2013 and September 2013. However, some observations at Lighthouse Advisory Board meetings were also included if these city and/or county meetings were discussed. During these observations, I took detailed field notes, which included dialogue between the members present and my reactions to what was occurring. My fieldnote observations were reinforced by documents provided by the San Marina Planning and Building Agency and included meeting agendas, materials and presentations prepared by San Marina planners, drafts of the ordinance, and the final approved ordinance. Interviews with Lighthouse Administrators were also used in this chapter. Originally, I intended to interview the San Marina city planner assigned to drafting Ordinance No. NS-2848. However, she did not respond to requests to be interviewed.

**People and Places.** The majority of interviews, about nine in total, were conducted with the Director of Social Services for Lighthouse. She was my supervisor during my time as a volunteer and salaried case manager and served as my gatekeeper throughout the entire data collection process. She oversees the Homeless Services Division within Lighthouse, works
mostly out of her office at Haven House, and serves as the “staff homeless representative” for Lighthouse’s Advisory Board. Interviews were mostly conducted in-person as informal debriefings after a city or county meeting. However, on one occasion an interview was conducted over the phone. An email chain between her and I was also included in my analysis.

A formal interview was also conducted with the Director of Business and Operations for Lighthouse. He refers to himself as the shelter “go to guy.” While he is not directly involved in the daily operations of the Homeless Services Division, the Director of Social Services reports to him for any major decisions involving Haven House or homelessness programming. He also plays a large role in decision-making for the new emergency shelter. Informal discussions that I have had with him before and after Lighthouse Advisory Board meetings were also analyzed.

The majority of meetings that I attended were in city council chambers, located next to San Marina’s City Hall. It is a large room with theater style seating arranged in a semi-circle. At the head of the room is a pen where the city council secretary, and city officials sit, facing the audience. Both planning commission meetings and city council meetings are held in this space. I imagine that this space can be intimidating to anyone new to the public hearing process, as this is how I felt during my first visit. There are very strict procedures to follow when addressing the council or making comments for public record. The language used also may be difficult to follow for a novice. However, there is no one available to describe this process to a newcomer. Instead, the rules are learned over time and through experience. Overall, this process does not seem to invite or facilitate public participation. In fact, during most meetings that I attended, empty chairs filled the room and it seemed that only people directly concerned with the designated agenda items were present.
Two meetings, a private meeting between San Marina planners and Lighthouse staff and a meeting with San Marina planners and property holders, were held in conference rooms within city hall. These rooms were less intimidating and resembled other conference rooms I have been in. Both had long oval tables with comfortable chairs arranged around the perimeter of each.

Lighthouse’s Advisory Board meetings took place in their main administrative offices, which also house one of their worship centers and preschool. Advisory Board meetings are held in a cozy room off their large event room. The room is equipped with a fireplace and is lined with dark wood paneling. For Advisory Board meetings, four large, round tables, accommodating eight people each, are set up with copies of meeting agendas, last meeting’s meeting minutes, and any other printed materials that will be discussed during the meeting. I usually sat at one of these tables next to the Director of Social Services. It was in this room, either before or after meetings began, that I would catch up the Director of Business and Operations. My formal interview with the Director of Business and Operations was held in his office, located in the same building.

Interviews with the Director of Social Services were held in the offices at Haven House. These offices are located at the back of the shelter, behind what are now used as the men’s transitional housing sleeping quarters (please refer to the Haven House Floor Plan provided in Chapter One). The offices include a larger room that is used for staff meetings and to house interns, and two smaller offices, one occupied by the Lead Case Manager (at one time this was my office) and the other by the Director of Social Services. She and I usually spoke in her office but, occasionally met in the larger room if no interns were present at the time.

**Data Collection.** This phase consisted of three types of data—observations, documents from the city, and interviews. Attendance and documentation of various meetings
regarding Ordinance No. NS-2848 provided a record of how this ordinance evolved over time. Interviews captured how these city processes affected Lighthouse’s shelter planning process. Documentation served to reinforce the information collected during observations and interviews but also provided additional records of important city planning processes that I was not invited to attend. These methods allowed me to glean the factors that hindered and or facilitated the adoption of the ordinance and to identify key stakeholders involved in these processes.

As mentioned above, data collection for this phase was focused on the process of creating and adopting Ordinance No. Ns 2848. As such, the majority of data were collected between June 24, 2013, the first time the San Marina Planning Commission met to discuss the ordinance, and September 3, 2013, when the San Marina City Council adopted the final ordinance. However, data collection for this phase began on November 5, 2012, when San Marina Planners had a closed meeting with Lighthouse Administrators to discuss a potential collaboration, and continued until the last Lighthouse Advisory Board meetings that I was invited to that year on April 10, 2014. Lighthouse Advisory Board and Program Committee meetings were included as data for this phase because I wanted to capture how this new ordinance was discussed by Lighthouse and how it may have affected planning decisions.

For public hearings held in council chambers, my role as a researcher was unknown. However, for more private meetings including Lighthouse Advisory Board and Program Committee meetings, the meeting with San Marinia planners and Lighthouse Administration, and the meeting for industrial property owners, I introduced myself as a researcher studying how services are planned and implemented for the homeless. With the exception of Lighthouse Program Committee Meetings, my participation in these meetings was minimal to nonexistent (I
sometimes asked an occasional clarifying question). As a member of Lighthouse’s Program Committee, I participated in the same way any other committee member would.

All observations were recorded in a notebook by hand and expanded into detailed field notes when I arrived home after each meeting. I used this method to record data because it proved the least obtrusive. I attempted to audio record my first Program Committee meeting, however, this seemed to make a few members uncomfortable. I was asked to stop recording twice while a member shared what they believed to be sensitive information. After that experience, I thought it best to cease audio recording and only take hand written notes, which other members did as well. Interviews most often took the form of casual debriefing sessions after a city or organizational meeting. Because of the casual nature of these interactions, notes were taken by hand and often integrated into fieldnotes, as is common in ethnographic research.

**Data Analysis.** Data consisted of Microsoft Word documents and PDF files. These files were organized chronologically in order to create a timeline of events. Using a top down approach (Gaber and Gaber, 2007) informed by the research questions, data were coded by hand. During open coding, I identified instances of stakeholder involvement, collaborations, and any factors that either hindered or facilitated the creation and adoption of the ordinance. These codes were expanded and collapsed into a list of more focused codes based on Guba’s (1981) guidelines of frequency and subjective importance. The files were then recoded with focused codes that tracked the involvement and effect of key stakeholders and policy on the ordinance. To determine how stakeholder views were reflected in the final draft of the ordinance, the data were coded to identify the various interests, needs, and recommendations provided by each stakeholder group. These interests, needs, and recommendations were compiled into a list and compared to the language of the final document.
Phase II: The Affected. This phase is largely based on efforts from the preliminary study discussed above. Data collected from interviews with 39 homeless women and from focus groups with 28 Haven House male clients answered the following research questions: (1) What are the homeless’ experiences using emergency shelter? (2) What do the homeless like about emergency shelter? (3) What do the homeless dislike about emergency shelter? (4) Based on their experiences using Haven House and other local shelters, what recommendations would the homeless make for improved service delivery? In addition to the data collected for the preliminary study, I used organizational documents to capture Lighthouse’s plans for their new emergency shelter. These plans represent the organization’s priorities for providing emergency shelter, which were compared to homeless individuals conceptualization of their ideal emergency shelter.

Data Sources.

Homeless Women. Thirty-nine homeless women were interviewed, 27 of which were staying at a homeless shelter, while the remaining 12 were staying on the streets, at least most nights. Since the original investigation was inspired by the underutilization of Haven House, the participants that were recruited would have been eligible to stay at Haven House but were instead staying elsewhere.

Homeless Men. Haven House opens its doors to single men, over the age of 18. Homeless men were eligible to participate in this study if they were guests at Haven House at the time of the focus group. In total, 28 men participated in two focus groups.

Lighthouse. Uncovering provider priorities for emergency shelter was more straightforward than discerning service user priorities for emergency shelter, because provider priorities are explicitly stated in two organizational documents. The first and most significant of
these documents was a detailed program proposal constructed by the organization which was submitted to Lighthouse’s Western Territory Headquarters for approval (Appendix B). This proposal detailed the new shelter’s purpose and goals, target population, funding sources, personnel and facility needs, intended affect, evaluation and monitoring plan, and spiritual emphasis, among other requirements (Lighthouse, 2013). Along with the program proposal for the new shelter, I used a list entitled Design Items for Architect that was presented to the Advisory Board on November 14, 2013 (Appendix C). This list was compiled by Lighthouse’s County Coordinator, the Director of Social Services, the Shelter Manager, the Director of Business and Operations, and the Chair of the Program Committee, and served as a vision for what they would like their new emergency shelter to be.

**People and Places.**

**Homeless Women.** The participants for this phase were sheltered and unsheltered homeless women. They were eligible to participate in this study if they were homeless, over the age of 18, and residing in Sunshine County, CA. On average, the women included in this study reported that they had been homeless for two years.

Homeless women were interviewed at four research sites. The first was the San Marina Armory. This is the largest shelter included in this project, serving up to 200 men and women per night during the winter season. Here, men and women are provided with a hot meal, snacks, showers if they want them, and a mat on the floor to sleep on. These mats are aligned side-by-side with men on the left side of the warehouse and women on the right.

On a shady street in the suburbs of San Marina you will find Daniel’s Place. Operated out of a private home, this shelter serves about 70 women per night. Here, most women spend their days on the shady outdoor patio. At night, both the first floor of the home and the patio
become a bedroom where women lay down their mats and blankets to sleep. In keeping with the Catholic Worker Movement, the homeowners believe that everyone has a right to basic needs, so there are no requirements for entry and guests can stay indefinitely.

Haven House’s Homeless Resource Office (HRO) was operated out of Haven House’s Social Services offices. Every month, Lighthouse allotted $800 to the HRO to assist walk-in clients with securing bus passes for appointments, prescription medications, clothing vouchers, birth certificates, California ID cards, or any other emergency needs of the homeless. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the homeless—or nearly homeless—lined up, waiting to be seen by a case manager who distributed vouchers or other resources as needed.

Depending on the time of day, anywhere from 500-600 homeless individuals can be found in a courtyard that separates several government buildings, including San Marina City Hall (San Marina Police Department Commander, personal communication, 2013). The homeless congregate here due to the proximity of many useful government buildings and because they receive services from non-profit organizations providing hot meals, outreach and referrals, and clothing. Many homeless individuals have amassed a small collection of camping tickets from the local police for staying here overnight.

*Homeless Men.* Both focus groups were held in the men’s lounge at Haven House. As discussed in Chapter One, Haven House is divided into two sections. Transitional housing clients are led down one hallway while emergency shelter guests are led down another hallway, which opens up into the men’s lounge. Behind the men’s lounge are the men’s sleeping quarters, bathrooms, and showers. The men’s lounge housed, at the time of the study, two couches, several armchairs, a large screen TV, and a floor to ceiling bookcase with books for guests to borrow. Shelter guests use the lounge as a recreation room and a meeting space for watching
TV, reading, or socializing. For meetings, chairs are usually added to the middle of the room so that approximately 20-30 people are comfortably accommodated at one time.

**Data Collection.**

*Homeless Women.* Gaining access to research sites and recruiting participants differed slightly among each site. I received permission from the Director of the nonprofit that operates the shelter to interview women at the Armory and coordinated my visits with their shelter manager. I arrived in the evenings, when guests were also arriving, and conducted interviews on nights when there were no other activities scheduled. On my first night, I approached several women sitting on their mats to explore their interest in participating. Once I received my first volunteer, I asked her for suggestions of other women I could interview. From that point on, I engaged in mostly snowball sampling. Although at this site, more than any other, I often had women volunteer to share their stories with me before I even asked.

I had already volunteered several times at Daniel’s Place and had interviewed the founder for a previous project. As a result, I was able to easily secure access to this site. In fact, it was the founder of this shelter, well-known by the homeless community as a friend and advocate, who helped facilitate most of my interviews with unsheltered homeless women. At this site, I directly approached most of the women I interviewed but also engaged in some snowball sampling.

Because I was conducting research on behalf of Lighthouse, I easily secured permission from my previous supervisor, the Director of Social Services for Lighthouse, Sunshine County, to recruit and conduct interviews with women at the HRO. A large proportion of individuals seeking assistance from HRO were men. I directly approached the few women seeking these services to ask them if they would like to participate. All of the women interviewed were staying
at Daniel’s Place with the exception of one. After a handful of interviews here, I thought it a better use of my resources to continue interviews at Daniel’s Place.

I was fortunate enough to have the founder of Daniel’s Place accompany me on trips to visit unsheltered women. His shelter is within walking distance from this area and he is well known by the individuals residing here. We arrived in the courtyard at either 10:30 AM or 4:30 PM, when his volunteers served meals, because more homeless women were present around this time. He often introduced me as a “friend and researcher,” which helped me establish trust with those that I interviewed. Sometimes he pointed out women laying on the grass, sitting on a bench, or standing in a food line that he thought might have an interesting perspective on some of my questions. Most women I approached independently and introduced myself. To maximize my efforts, I took three trained research assistants with me to conduct interviews at this site. These research assistants secured two interviews with unsheltered women, after I introduced myself and my team to them.

Generally, I approached women at each site and supplied a brief overview of the purpose of the study and the content of the interview. Women who agreed to participate engaged in a semi-structured, face-to-face interview that included some predetermined questions and allowed for flexibility and open interaction. Interviews lasted anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour and 15 minutes and were audio recorded when permission was given. Women were compensated with an Sunshine County day pass for the bus, valued at $4.00, as a gesture to thank them for their time.

While collecting interviews, I also recorded my observations and experiences in the field as fieldnotes. Fieldnotes contained an account of incidents that may have happened before or
after interviews, impressions I received from participants, informal conversations that I had with service providers or homeless individuals, and ideas for emerging themes.

The interview guide covered a range of topics including overall quality of life, life satisfaction, where unsheltered homeless women stay at night, length of time and reasons for homelessness, sources of social support, and sources of income. However, this dissertation focuses on the data received from questions regarding experiences with homelessness and service use, including benefits and barriers to using shelter, likes and dislikes of emergency shelter, and suggestions for improvements to the services being offered by Sunshine County.

**Homeless Men.** In late April, 2013, I met the Director of Social Services for Lighthouse at Haven House to discuss my progress interviewing women and Haven House’s progress with the new shelter. I learned that Lighthouse was considering targeting only men at their new shelter. Worried that they would not have feedback from their possible population of interest regarding their services, I offered to conduct two focus groups at Haven House to chronicle men’s experiences using emergency shelter. Focus groups were suggested in place of interviews to expeditiously provide feedback to Haven House before they reached a final decision regarding their intended target population. I received permission from Lighthouse, Sunshine County’s Coordinator, the Director of Social Services, and the Shelter Manager to proceed.

Shelter guests were recruited using flyers posted on information boards throughout the shelter. I also arrived at the shelter 45 minutes prior to each focus group to make an announcement during dinner service. Interviews were held on May 9th and May 14th, 2013. Because shelter guests are allowed a 7 to 14 day stay every 30 days, this allowed for significant turnover of the men present. In total, 28 unduplicated men participated in two focus groups lasting between 45 minutes to an hour. I had informed the shelter staff to please refrain from
interrupting these sessions and planned to keep all doors leading to the men’s lounge closed while each focus group was in session. My main concern was that participants would feel uncomfortable being honest about their experiences at the shelter with shelter staff in earshot. However, it seemed that participants did not share my initial concerns. During the first focus group, the men insisted I opened both doors to the room because it was getting too warm. I explained my concerns about protecting their privacy so we compromised and I opened the back door, which led to a patio.

In these focus groups, men were asked to share their experiences with service use, and more specifically, with emergency shelter. Most of these conversations centered on their use of Haven House. I also asked the men to make specific recommendations for improving Haven House service delivery and facilities. For a complete list of questions, please see Appendix D. It is important to note that I allowed the discussion to develop organically. I was interested not only in the answers to questions that appeared on the interview guide but also in hearing what these men felt was relevant and important to share. Therefore, the interview guide does not present a completely exhaustive list of the topics discussed.

*Lighthouse.* The program proposal was presented during an Advisory Board meeting on September 12, 2013. After the meeting, I sent the Director of Social Services an email asking for an electronic copy. The Chair of the Program Committee presented the *Design Items for Architect* list to the Advisory Board. After the Board of Director’s meeting, I approached her and asked if I could have a copy of the complete list. She emailed me the list later that day. The final document, which was the program proposal for the new shelter, was shared with all those in attendance (me included) at a Advisory Board meeting on November 14, 2013.
**Data Analysis.** Interviews, focus groups, and documents were coded using a top-down approach. In other words, coding was guided by my research questions as opposed to letting codes emerge exclusively from the data (Gaber and Gaber, 2007). I used open coding to identify men and women’s experiences using emergency shelter, preferences for programming and facilities, and recommendations for improving emergency shelter. After obtaining an exhaustive list of open codes, I created more focused codes based on how men and women conceptualize shelter, efforts accessing and using shelter, likes and dislikes regarding the services they have used, and ideas for what an ideal shelter would offer. After recoding the data using these focused codes, I compiled a list of men and women’s ideals for emergency shelter.

A manifest content analysis, an analysis that focuses on the existence or frequency of certain words or concepts and not the relationship between them (Gaber and Gaber, 2007), was used to analyze organizational documents. This approach was chosen because organizational documents clearly outline plans and preferences for their new shelter. As such, my role was to identify and organize these plans so that they could be compared to homeless individuals’ ideals for emergency shelter. Ideals for emergency shelter shared by Lighthouse and homeless men and women were displayed using a Venn Diagram, to clearly illustrate instances where ideals overlapped and where they differed.

**Phase III: The Involved.** Phase III transitions from an understanding of the context to an examination of the embedded case—Lighthouse. I examined Lighthouse’s planning efforts for their new shelter beginning as early as April, 2013 and ending in January 15, 2015. Ordinance No. NS-2848 was approved in September of 2013, marking a shift from conceptual to more concrete planning efforts, even though some preliminary planning occurred prior to this date. Data collection concluded on January 15, 2015. Data collection concluded at
this time due to my decreased access to the planning process, described above, and because I was able to introduce a major initiative for client participation (described in Chapter Six), and thus considered this a natural ending point.

The main aim of Phase III was to encourage client participation in planning Lighthouse’s new emergency shelter. The following research questions accompanied this aim: (1) What factors facilitate client participation? (2) What factors constrain client participation in the planning process? To answer these questions, I embedded myself, as much as the organization would allow, in the shelter planning process both as an observer and participant observer.

**Data Sources.** This phase was ethnographic in nature and most of the data appeared as fieldnotes. Fieldnotes for this project contained written accounts of (1) the sequence of events at Advisory Board, Program Committee, and other planning meetings; (2) physical interactions between participants (myself included) at these meetings including gestures and facial expressions; (3) verbal interaction between participants (myself included) at these meetings; and (4) my interpretations and reflections of events and interactions at these meetings. Fieldnotes included observations, participant observations, and informal interviews with Lighthouse staff, administrators, and board members. When appropriate, fieldnotes also included email correspondense, summary of phone calls, and my reflections on those emails and phone calls with Lighthouse staff, administrators, and board members.

In addition to fieldnotes, organizational documents were also analyzed. These documents included Advisory Board and Program Committee meeting agendas, Advisory Board meeting minutes, and other planning documents such as the concept proposals submitted for the new shelter and a Community Needs Assessment and Planning report completed by the organization in 2008. Other organizational documents that were analyzed included the National Social
Services Standards and the Manual of Advisory Organizations. These documents were produced by Lighthouse’s national organization.

**People and Places.** I observed and interacted with Lighthouse staff, administrators and board members, all stakeholders in the new emergency shelter. Lighthouse staff offices are located within their current shelter. Lighthouse staff work with clients daily and they will deliver the new shelters services, once they are implemented. The staff member that I interacted with most frequently was the Director of Social Services for Lighthouse, Sunshine County. Despite overseeing all social service divisions within the organization, she works almost exclusively out of her office at the Haven House, Lighthouse’s current emergency shelter. Because she started as a Case Manager with Lighthouse, she still enjoys working individually with clients, along with her administrative duties. Although she is technically an administrator, because of her proximity to homeless clients, for the purposes of this study, I considered her a staff member. I also interacted with the Shelter Manager and the Lead Case Manager.

Lighthouse administrators work outside of the shelter, at Lighthouse’s main offices, but provide oversight for all Lighthouse programs, including the Homeless Services Division. The Lighthouse Administrators that I interacted with most were the Director of Business and Operations for Lighthouse, Sunshine County, and the Lighthouse County Coordinator. Finally, Lighthouse’s Advisory Board plays a very significant role in organizational decision making. Alterations to existing programs or the creation of new ones must be approved by the board, especially when the allocation of funds, property, staff, or other resources are needed. Although I observed all Lighthouse board members, I most commonly interacted with those board members also serving on the Program Committee.
Fieldnotes were collected in two locations. The first was Lighthouse’s administrative offices which are located on a Lighthouse owned “campus” called Sunshine Ranch. Here, all activities in Sunshine County including homeless services, family services, adult rehabilitation centers, thrift stores, and worship centers are overseen. Along with offices, Sunshine Ranch also houses a church, conference rooms, a large hall with a stage, and a preschool. Advisory Board meetings are also held here every second Thursday of the month in a large conference room across from the offices. Fieldnotes were also collected at Haven House, Lighthouse’s current emergency shelter. All Program Committee meetings were scheduled in the Haven House dining room and follow up conversations with staff such as the Director of Social Services and the Shelter Manager were held in Haven House’s Social Services offices.

**Data Collection.** Advisory Board and Program Committee meetings anchored data collection. However, there were other opportunities for me to collect data as a result of, and in between, these meetings. These opportunities included debriefing sessions, follow up meetings, and other planning meetings (for a complete list of data collection opportunities, please refer to Appendix E). During this phase, I juggled the roles of an observer, participant observer, and change agent.

During Advisory Board meetings, I was mostly an observer. I was either invited to attend Advisory Board’ meetings by the Director of Social Services or requested permission to attend from the County Coordinator’s administrative assistant. At the meetings, I sat next to the Director of Social Services, observed the proceedings, and took detailed notes. On two occasions, I was asked to speak. The first was at the first meeting I attended, when I introduced myself to the board, explained that I was a researcher and previous case manager, and discussed my interest in learning more about how services were planned and implemented for the
homeless. The second was when I was very briefly able to discuss the findings of an initiative for client participation, the results of which were summarized for board members in a handout (please refer to the *Chapter Six: The Involved*, for more information on this). Before and after Advisory Board meetings, I engaged in informal interviews, or casual conversations with board members of Lighthouse administrators, usually about business that had been brought up during the meeting. Advisory Board meetings were held bi-monthly from September-June. In total, I attended six Advisory Board meetings before I lost access from June 13, 2013 to September 14, 2014.

During Program Committee meetings, I was a participant observer, and, when possible, a change agent. On September 12, 2013, I joined the Program Committee. During the first Program Committee meeting, I introduced myself as a previous case manager and researcher interested in how services are planned and implemented for the homeless. I asked for permission to audio record the meeting. Although permission was granted, as stated above, some members expressed concern and I was asked to shut off the recording for conversations that were deemed too sensitive. After this meeting, I took notes exclusively by hand in order to capture the unguarded responses and reactions of Program Committee members.

During Program Committee meetings, I also provided my opinion about agenda items, as any other member, and, when appropriate, attempted to encourage more inclusive planning practices. Just as I did during Advisory Board meetings, I would often engage Program Committee members in informal interviews, before and after meetings. I also worked with the Program Committee Chair in between meetings to set agenda items and schedule the next meeting. This provided me the opportunity to put myself on the agenda and make two formal presentations to the Program Committee on client participation (please refer to Chapter X for
more information on this). Program Committee meetings were held at the discretion of the Program Committee. I attended all scheduled Program Committee meetings, five in total, between January 9, 2014 and January 15, 2015.

**Data Analysis.** Data analysis for Phase III was unique, in that qualitative analysis software was used to organize and code the various layers of data. Fieldnotes, agendas, meeting minutes, and other organizational documents were uploaded into Atlas.Ti for analysis. I first engaged in open coding, focusing on the planning process for the new shelter. In this phase, I used a bottom-up approach to coding, letting most of the codes emerge from the data, instead of from the research questions, theory, or other sources (Gaber and Gaber, 2007). I adopted this approach because so much data had been collected over a large period of time, that I first wanted to explore what was there, before I decided what was relevant to my research questions. Techniques borrowed from Glaser’s (1965) constant comparative method were used to compare the properties of each open code to each other and to collapse and expand codes based on the research questions, code frequency, and what appeared most salient in the data. These collapsed and expanded codes were used to conduct a final, focused coding of the data.
CHAPTER FOUR: THE CITY

On November 4, 2015, Lighthouse demolished Haven House and will replace it with a larger facility, which can accommodate 75 homeless men, in the next year. However, when Lighthouse first approached the city of San Marina over ten years ago with their proposal for a new shelter, they were met with resistance (Director of Business and Operations, personal communication, 2013). As such, Lighthouse was unable to move forward with their plans. The city council of San Marina approved Ordinance No. NS 2848 (referred to as the ordinance in this chapter) on September 13, 2013 (Planning and Building Agency, 2013). This ordinance legally empowered Lighthouse to expand by designating specific zoning categories where emergency shelters and other homeless services could be established without a conditional use permit or public interference.

In this chapter, I discuss the process that resulted in the creation of the ordinance, along with analyzing an uncommon collaborative partnership between Lighthouse and the Planning and Building Agency of San Marina. Multiple factors aligned to create an environment supporting the adoption of this ordinance in Sunshine County. I will use Kingdon’s theory of agenda setting to present and analyze these factors.

The data from this chapter was derived from multiple sources (please refer to Appendix F for a complete listing). The majority of the data came from attending planning meetings relevant to the ordinance including a forum held for the property holders of the area affected by the ordinance, planning commission and city council meetings where the ordinance was on the agenda, and a private meeting between San Marina city planners and Lighthouse administrative staff which defined the motivations and roles for their collaborative partnership. This information was reinforced by official city documents (meeting agendas, materials and
presentations prepared by San Marina planners, drafts of the ordinance, and the final approved ordinance) and interviews with Lighthouse Administration. The interviewees include the Director of Business and Operations and the shelter project “go to guy,” and the Director of Social Services. It is important to note that the San Marina city planner assigned to this project, did not respond to requests to be interviewed.

**A Window of Opportunity**

Kingdon (1995) describes agendas as a list of subjects or problems to which government officials, and people outside of government closely associated with those officials, are paying some serious attention to at any given time (pg.3). Three process streams affect setting these agendas, or priorities: problem recognition, formation and refining of policy proposals, and politics. *Problem recognition* involves recognizing and defining an issue. These issues capture the attention of government officials. For instance, a notable event or crisis, such as a school shooting, may focus more attention on some issues, like gun control, more than others. Formation and refining of *policy proposals* refers to ideas that policy makers have to address recognized problems. Ideas may come from the accumulation of knowledge that a specialist possesses or various popular perspectives about a particular issue. Ideas can also emerge from sweeping broad understandings or fads or can be built over time through discussions with other experts and exposure to research. Finally, agenda setting is affected by the *politics* of the time. Kingdon describes this as “swings in national mood, election results, changes of administration, interest group pressure campaigns” (pg. 87).

Sometimes these process streams may merge, though only for short periods of time. When they do, they create a policy window or “an opportunity for pushing one’s proposals…open for a short time, when conditions to push a given subject higher on the policy
agenda are right” (pg. 88). Kingdon (1995) argues that only when the “right” issues are recognized and the “right” solutions are proposed during the “right” climate can a public policy be created. Using this framework as a guide, below I discuss how the “right” factors converged to create and pass an ordinance that marks the official beginning of Lighthouse’s shelter planning process.

**Problem Recognition**

**County Problem Recognition.** Kingdon (1995) recognizes several reasons why a given problem is defined and recognized over others. Some of these reasons include the problem’s magnitude, feedback from existing programs, the pre-existence of a prominent proposal or solution, and/or people of some importance finally just deciding to address it. It is quite possible that a combination of all of these reasons encouraged Sunshine County to recognize homelessness as a problem worth channeling collective resources to solve.

**2020 Plan.** In the previous chapters, I discussed the extent of homelessness in America and, more specifically in Sunshine County. I also discussed the lack of availability of and accessibility to services to address the needs of the population. In 2000, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, “the largest partnership dedicated to ending homelessness” (“About Us”, n.d., para. 4), published a ten year plan to end homelessness in the United States (National Alliance to End Homelessness, n.d.). Since its release, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Bush Administration publicly supported strategic planning for homeless alleviation using a ten year timeline. In addition, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness challenged cities across the country to develop their own ten year plans to end homelessness. By 2009, there were 234 completed plans to end homelessness.
across the country, 79% of those were city or county plans (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2009).

In 2008, various stakeholder groups within the county comprised of “business members; non-profit homeless service providers; technical consultants; philanthropic foundations; education, mental health, housing, and shelter providers; and local government” formed a working group with the premise that homelessness in Sunshine County is both unacceptable and a community-wide responsibility to eradicate. This marked a large-scale effort on the part of the county to define, understand, and pose solutions to solve homelessness. The result of this effort was a ten-year plan to end homelessness in Sunshine County by 2020 (2020 Plan) and a newly created Commission to End Homelessness, which included local government, non-profit, and business members of the community with a stake in homeless alleviation.

The 2020 Plan recognized that the accessibility of emergency shelter beds is “woefully inadequate” to meet the county’s needs. Due to the county’s “scattered and piecemeal response” to homeless services (p.59), motels have shouldered the burden of housing the homeless. However, according to the plan, this is problematic for many reasons. Not only is this expensive and unsafe for the homeless, but also motels are often located away from other needed services. Also, using motels as last resort emergency shelter strains relationships with the external community making it difficult to maintain the relationships needed to develop lasting solutions through larger community efforts.

The San Marina Planning and Building Agency defines the homeless problem by estimating the number of homeless residing in San Marina and subtracting the number of

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available beds in the city to calculate the homeless need. Homeless need was determined using Sunshine County’s 2011 point-in-time count, a federally mandated, biannual count of the homeless across the country (2013 and 2015 data were not yet available) and San Marina’s 2013 Housing Inventory, which takes stock of all homeless assistance programs and the number of beds they possess. Based on these sources, there were an estimated 1,388 homeless persons residing in San Marina and an unmet homeless housing need of 1,060 persons or beds (Planning and Building Agency, 2013).

Not in My Backyard. As mentioned previously, Lighthouse has had the need and desire to build a new shelter but were consistently met with opposition from the city. The Director of Business and Operations for Lighthouse, described meeting with the previous city manager of San Marina with a request to expand Haven House and was told “over my dead body.” Similar sentiments were echoed during a Lighthouse Advisory Board meeting on February 13, 2014, where the chair of the Finance Committee stated “up until this law (the ordinance) the city was hostile towards us addressing the property (their current shelter).”

Not in my backyard, or NIMBY, attitudes have been discussed in planning literature since the 1980’s and was notably described by New York City’s previous Mayor, Ed Koch, as “the protectionists attitudes of and oppositional tactics adopted by community groups facing unwelcome development in their neighborhood….Residents usually concede that these noxious facilities are necessary, but not near their homes, hence the term not in my backyard” (Dear, 1991, p. 288). NIMBY opposition has been responsible for delaying and even thwarting attempts by governments and non-profits to provide a variety of human services to multiple disadvantaged and vulnerable groups including jails, halfway houses, and (most relevant to this context) shelters and other assistance programs for the homeless. Kingdon (1995) also notes
“public opinion may sometimes direct government to *do* something, but it more often constrains government *from* doing something (p. 65).

In Sunshine County, NIMBY attitudes from residents and city officials have stalled the establishment of any new shelters. In fact, Sunshine County remains one of the largest metropolitan areas without a year-round emergency shelter\(^\text{12}\). This is often attributed to community opposition. The director of Sunshine County Community Services Department blamed “community opposition” for “effectively kill[ing]” two large scale shelter projects in the last few years by putting “pressure on the city council”\(^\text{13}\).

According to Dear (1992) public arguments against the appearance of these facilities in the local community are most commonly centered around perceived threat to property values, personal safety, and overall neighborhood quality. Opponents most often express these concerns during zoning hearings, as the introduction of new human services often requires an amendment to previously established zoning laws. This was precisely the case in San Marina, as described in more detail below.

**Policy Proposals**

Every recognized problem can inspire a multitude of policy proposals. However, not all solutions are chosen and implemented. Kingdon (1995) outlines several “criteria for survival” (p. 131) of proposed policies including technical feasibility, value acceptability, and anticipation of future constraints. Technical feasibility is achieved when all of the details required for implementation have been thought through and the proposal is believed to “actually accomplish what we want it to accomplish” and “actually be administrable” (p. 132). Value acceptability

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refers to the proposal’s compatibility with the values of the community members or specialists interested in the problem. Finally, Kingdon states that a proposal is likely to survive if decision-makers believe that it will hold up to future constraints such as budgetary restrictions, political approval, and public criticism.

**Organization Proposed Solutions.** As discussed in previous chapters, Lighthouse’s Haven House was first built in 1964 to house 36 transient men. In the last 50 years, it has seen many changes serving men, women, and families. In 2012, Haven House transitioned to serving exclusively men once again. Before demolition, they had 50 beds in their facility, 36 of which were for emergency shelter or two week stays. The other 14 were used for their transitional housing programs or stays that range from 30 days to six months.

To better serve the homeless community of Sunshine County, Lighthouse is expanding their emergency shelter. Because Lighthouse follows a hierarchical organizational structure, they had to receive approval from their Divisional and Territorial Headquarters to begin early planning of this new shelter. In order to receive approval, Lighthouse in Sunshine County developed and submitted a proposal for their new shelter. The proposal addressed the new shelter’s technical feasibility by outlining program duration, funding sources, personnel and facilities needed, and an evaluation and monitoring plan. The proposal also discussed how the new shelter reflects the values held by the organization in its purpose and goals and spiritual emphasis (for more details on this proposal please refer to *Chapter Five* and Appendix B).

The most debated issue of this proposal was which population would be served. The Director of Business and Operations described this process:

*Director of Business and Operations (DBO):* So, because in our first meetings there were discussions all over the board about how we should help everyone.
We should help men, women, and families with children. Other people said, ‘We can't do that! We don't have the space. We don't have the parking. There will be *protect the mission* issues in terms of how we separate men and children, and things like that. So, all of those sorts of things needed to go into that decision-making process……

Me: So then, how did that end up being reconciled?

*DBO:* Not very well, frankly. If you look at our initial renderings (preliminary drawings of the shelter) they are a bit conducive to trying to help everyone. Our County Coordinator at the time didn't really think that was feasible. We actually talked about just keeping the men where they are now and building a small dirt facility at The ARC (a Lighthouse operated rehabilitation center) for women and children. The new County Coordinator was even more targeted in his thinking about the men-only population. That is probably where our history is greatest, in terms of our expertise, and it may be a little bit easier and more workable to focus on serving one population better then giving a less then great service to multiple populations. That's kind of where we're at right now, but that internal process was not as fluid and as quickly resolved as I would've liked to have seen.”

Here, the Director of Business and Operations describes the internal debate over whom to serve in their new shelter. Some individuals on the Advisory Board felt strongly about continuing to serve men, women, and families (at the time of this debate, those were the populations currently being served at Haven House). However, housing different populations meant dividing up the shelter to separate these groups and would result in total bed loss. Also, Lighthouse has a richer
history serving men. These factors led the County Coordinator for Lighthouse to take a more targeted approach, deciding to plan for a men’s only shelter.

After deciding the target population, the rest of the proposal was constructed, in large part, by the Director of Social Services who directly oversees the emergency shelter and other homeless programs. According Lighthouse’s new shelter proposal, the new facility would expand to house 75 homeless men, instead of 50, for a period of 30 days instead of 14. The increase in length of stay was, in part, due to federal restructuring of the emergency shelter system to encourage homeless individuals to enter into stable housing within 30 days of entry into emergency shelter (Director of Social Services, personal communication, 2013). The building would also be flexible to accommodate changes in programming as a response to the changing needs of the homeless population over time.

**County Proposed Solutions.** The 2020 Plan was conceived and guided by the core values set forth by the working group that made up the initial Commission to End Homelessness. These values include but are not limited to: preserving human dignity, the opportunity for safe housing for everyone, and courage. The plan also discusses that every aspect of the plan was conceived with the “expectation of success….realistic optimism….and anticipation of achieving the end of homelessness.” This language suggests consideration of both feasibility and future constraints. With these considerations in mind, the 2020 Plan outlined nine goals to address homelessness in the county including preventing homelessness, improving outreach services, standardizing service provider data management across agencies, and advocate for change in social policy. The plan outlines as its third goal to improve the efficacy of the

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emergency shelter system. This goal has several strategies including supporting the county’s cold weather emergency shelter (open from about November-March), the Armories, and developing year-round emergency shelter to eventually replace the Armories.

As described in the Introduction, the Armories traditionally house 400 homeless individuals during the cold weather months. Along with Lighthouse’s Haven House serving a small number of homeless men, this is the only emergency shelter in the county. However, funding for this shelter is tenuous, forcing the Armories to open late or close early during some seasons. A proposed solution is to secure funding for the Armories from the county until they can ultimately be replaced with several permanent facilities. Permanent emergency shelters will not only allow homeless individuals a place to stay 365 days a year, but also provide the opportunity for the formation of long-term partnerships with other services agencies that can provide needed on-site services such as Sunshine County’s mental health and social services offices.

In order to establish a permanent emergency shelter, the 2020 Plan proposes to “determine the number of [emergency shelters] that are appropriate and feasible,” with a specific goal of replacing the 400 beds provided by the Armories plus an additional 100 beds for homeless families; provide or refer out to other needed services such as medical and mental health care and counseling; and provide a day center for those who are unable to work to have an alternative place to stay during the day besides the street\(^\text{16}\). The 2020 Plan, proposes to implement its nine goals in four phases. Improving the efficacy of emergency shelter was proposed for years three and four of the Ten Year Plan and was, therefore, expected to be

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completed by year 2014. Despite attempts to consider feasibility, it is clear that not all of the goals outlined in The 2020 Plan will be successfully achieved.

**State Proposed Solution.** Senate Bill 2 (SB 2), also known as the Fair Share Zoning Bill, was written in the hopes of dispersing the responsibility of service provision to the homeless amongst cities and counties throughout California (George, 2007). At the time it was written, the author, Councilman Cedillo, was working as a state senator charged with Downtown LA, which currently houses the state’s largest homeless population, mostly in Skid Row. Although housing and other services for the homeless are supported in principle, push back from residents and officials near proposed service sites concentrated service provision to this area. Anticipating the constraints on service provision due to community opposition, the goal of this bill was to share the responsibility of the immense homeless population with surrounding cities; empower all California cities to provide local solutions to homelessness; and protect service providers from NIMBY attitudes (HomeBase The Center for Common Concerns, 2008). NIMBY attitudes have already been discussed as a hinderance to the creation of homeless services.

SB 2 extends existing legislation by compelling California cities to estimate the number of homeless people in their jurisdiction and plan enough services to meet their need; provide zoning categories in their Housing Elements for emergency shelters without discretionary approval from local government; and limit the number of proposals for emergency shelters that they can reject.

**Political Climate**

On October 13th, 2007 Governor Schwarzenegger signed SB 2 into law (Legislative Counsel of California, 2007). As discussed above, part of this bill requires cities to provide
designated zones in their Housing Elements for emergency shelters. The Governor’s Office of Planning and Research outlines seven elements that must be addressed in general plan for cities and counties (Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, 2003). One of these elements, the Housing Element, is a plan to meet existing and projected housing needs in a community (California Department of Housing and Community Development, n.d.). As such, the passing of SB 2 requires cities to plan for homeless housing needs for the duration of the Housing Element as they would any other community need.

Housing Elements are updated every five to eight years. As such, the California Department of Housing and Community Development mandated that Sunshine County’s regional government submit their Housing Element for the planning period of October 15, 2013 to October 15, 2021 by October 15th, 2013 (California Department of Housing and Community Development, n.d.). Cities across Sunshine County were thus required to accommodate SB 2 mandates into their plans by October 15, 2013. San Marina began community outreach and planning for the SB 2 requirement in January of 2012 and were able to include their plan for housing the homeless as an ordinance by this deadline.

**The Open Window: Ordinance No NS-2848**

The ordinance was adopted to comply with SB 2’s mandates and was added to Sunshine County’s 2013-2021 Housing Elements. On June 20, 2013, an initial draft of the ordinance was released which designated a particular “light industrial” and “heavy industrial” zone to new emergency shelters (Planning and Building Agency, 2013).
Here providers could establish emergency shelters, defined as “housing with minimal supportive services for homeless persons that is limited to occupancy of six months or less…where no individual or household may be denied emergency shelter because of an inability to pay” (p.2). The ordinance also allows for multi-service centers (sometimes referred to as “one-stop shops”), supportive housing, and transitional housing in the designated zone as long as these facilities meet certain “regulations.” These regulations provide for “public health, safety, and welfare” (p.1). Regulations for emergency shelters include:

1. **Zones.** Complying with development and operational standards of the land use zone in which the facility is located.

2. **Occupancy.** A maximum of 30 shelter beds per facility (any facility that proposes more beds will be subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit), with the exception of one multiservice center, which should have between 150-200 shelter beds.
3. *Separation Criteria.* A location that is 500 feet away from a residential zone or residentially zoned property such as a school, park, or child care facility unless a “significant physical feature acts as a barrier…such as a freeway [or] railroad right of way.” Also, facilities should be located at least 300 feet apart from each other.

4. *Parking.* At least one parking space should be provided per five shelter beds as well as a covered, secured area for bicycle parking for staff and clients.

5. *Waiting and Intake Area.* A client and intake area should be included that separates clients from the public and should be sufficient in size to accommodate all persons waiting to enter the facility.

6. *Support Services.* The following support services should be included on site:
   a. Food preparation and dining
   b. Laundry facilities
   c. Restrooms and showers
   d. Secured areas to store belongings
   e. Indoor and outdoor recreational facilities and/or open space
   f. A private area for providing referral services

7. *Length of Stay.* A length of stay that is no more than six months in a 12-month period.

8. *Management and Operation Plan.* The submission of a plan to the Planning Manager in consultation with the Chief of Police that outlines best practices for the facility. The Management and Operation Plan should include “a security plan, procedures, list of services, staff training, a ‘good neighbor’ communication plan, client transport and active transportation plan, ratio of staff to clients, client eligibility, intake and check out process, detailed hours of operation, ongoing outreach plan to San Marina homeless population,
and participation in data collection for the Sunshine County region’s Homeless Management Information System.”

**The Ordinance: Responsiveness to Proposed Solutions**

**The 2020 Plan.** As mentioned above, Goal 3 of the 2020 Plan is to improve the efficacy of the emergency shelter and access system\(^\text{17}\). Contained within this goal are several strategies for meeting it including setting up a 24-hour, permanent site to replace the Armories that provides on-site services. This shelter should be low threshold, or have minimal to no requirements for entrance, to accommodate most of the homeless in the county. Ideally, a separate facility should also be established specifically to house homeless families. These shelters should follow a rapid-rehousing model where eligible individuals and families are rapidly placed in more stable housing situations such as transitional housing or permanent supportive housing.

After careful reading and content analysis, it seems that the ordinance addressed the goals and strategies of Sunshine County’s 2020 Plan. Because one of the two Armories falls within San Marina city boundaries, the ordinance allows for the construction of what they refer to as a Multi-Service Center without a conditional use permit. This center must have anywhere from 150-200 beds, remain open 24-hours a day and have several basic and supportive services on-site including a full kitchen and meal services, case management, showers, mental health and medical services, computer access, job and life skills training, and legal assistance. As such, the Multi-Service Center could serve as a replacement for the San Marina Armory.

The ordinance also allows for an unspecified number of smaller facilities, called emergency shelters with no more than 30 beds. These facilities are required to provide some

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basic services on site (see Supportive Services listed above) but may close during the day.

Although providing services specifically for families is not discussed within the ordinance, one or more of these emergency shelters could be designated for homeless families.

    Based on these findings, the ordinance provides the opportunity for providers to establish the programs necessary to address the 2020 Plan. As such, it facilitates the achievement of Goal 3 of the 2020 Plan. However, it is up to individual service providers to fund the construction and delivery of services that address the strategies outlined to create a more efficacious and accessible emergency shelter system. Since there are currently no new shelters that have opened in the ordinance zones since the passing of this ordinance, it is uncertain whether this goal will actually be achieved by the year 2020.

    **SB 2.** The mandates set forth by SB 2 can be divided into two parts. First, cities are required to estimate the number of homeless individuals residing within their boundaries and determine the unmet need. Second, cities must identify zones within their boundaries where emergency shelters and other homeless services can be established without a conditional use permit. Doing so bypasses the public hearing process. These zones must also be large enough to accommodate the necessary amount and size of homeless shelters to address the need.

    Based on my analysis, the ordinance satisfies both parts of the SB 2 mandates. Although not included in the text of the mandate itself, city planners did document the estimated number of homeless individuals residing in San Marina County and the beds needed to adequately serve the population in the Request for Committee Action submitted to the Planning Commission on July 8th and 22nd, 2013 (Planning and Building Agency, 2013). These numbers were also included in presentations to San Marina’s industrial property stakeholders, Development and Transportation Council Committee, Community Redevelopment and Housing Commission, service provider
stakeholders, Planning Commission, and City Council. These documents and presentations are available for public viewing on San Marina’s Planning Website. The Request for Committee Action, states that city planners used existing emergency shelters to estimate that the square footage needed to address the city’s unmet need is a total of 31 acres of land. However, the city identified zones that total 995 acres which fulfills the requirements of SB 2 and also accommodates for any future need.

**Planning and the Collaborative Process**

San Marina city planners delivered several presentations regarding the ordinance in which they refer to their planning process as a “collaborative process” (Planning and Building Agency, 2013). In a section of the Request for Planning Commission Action entitled *Community Outreach*, the planners name their collaborators as the San Marina Police Department; Parks, Recreation and Community Services; Housing Division and Planning Division staff; City Council Committee on Development and Transportation; the Community Redevelopment and Housing Commission; Planning Commission; industrial property owners; and local service providers.

**Homeless Service Providers Stakeholder Meeting.** The San Marina Planning and Building Agencies hosted two meetings with service providers to gain feedback on the ordinance. These meetings were held on May 23, 2012 and January 16, 2013. At these meetings, planners presented information on SB 2 and the proposed details and framework of the ordinance. Then, providers divided into breakout groups and were given questions to guide a productive discussion on what the content of the ordinance should be. Most commonly, providers discussed the need for the ordinance to (1) ensure flexibility to providers when determining how their programs would operate; (2) address the need for large and even screened
waiting areas; and (3) require at least one 24-hour facility to serve as a multi-service center where individuals could safely store belongings and have open space and public showers and restrooms.

Comparing the information gathered from both service provider meetings to the text of the ordinance, city planners accommodated most of service providers feedback and concerns (see Table 1). One of the most frequently requested features was that the ordinance needed to be flexible to accommodate various provider’s plans and goals for programming within each facility. As a result, the ordinance makes little mention of how programs should be structured, except to list certain required supportive services. This lack of programming specificity within the ordinance grants providers authority and freedom to incorporate their programming ideas into their future facilities. For example, in the first meeting, one break-out group discussed the importance of using the smaller shelters to cater to one subpopulation of the homeless or another (families, illegal immigrants, people with mental health diagnosis, etc) and steering clear of a “one size fits all” approach to service delivery. The wording of the ordinance does not require any one shelter to cater to one population or another, leaving it to provider discretion to determine the populations they wish to serve in their facility.

Table 1: Service Provider Feedback for Emergency Shelter. Note: Items that appear in grey were not addressed in the ordinance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Provider Feedback</th>
<th>Times Mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure storage space for clients’ belongings</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility needed</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity rooms/ central meeting rooms</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter should be open all day</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of beds—30-50; 30-60; up to 40</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiting lines—problematic; screened waiting area needed</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open space/ outdoor space</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-service center</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public restrooms and showers provided</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No threshold shelter needed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking standards revisited</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various security issues should be addressed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation to and from shelter and nearby services</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter for different populations/ not “one-size-fits-all” approach</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional housing needed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize resources and providers within the city</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal assistance provided</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry services provided</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot meals provided—full kitchen optional</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case management/ private assessments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete definition of shelter needed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City should create opportunity for providers to provide shelter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build provider relationships with Police Department</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect homeless to housing after shelter stay</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple shelter locations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A single, larger location is cost effective</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter management plan needed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to reuse and renovate old buildings</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services within walking distance of shelter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance between shelter and other activities (schools, residences, etc)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varying length of shelter stay</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for garbage management</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with school district</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional pet area</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mandatory services for clients</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Industrial Property Owner Stakeholder Meeting.** On June 18, 2013 the Planning and Building Agency in San Marina sent a letter to San Marina industrial property owners. This letter informed property owners about SB 2 mandates and that “based on a set of criteria that included access to public transit and separation from sensitive uses such as schools, parks, and residences, industrially-zoned properties were identified as the most appropriate to consider for new emergency shelter” (Planning and Building Agency, 2013). Property owners, being affected by this rezoning, were invited by the Planning and Building Agency to provide “feedback on this matter” on Thursday, June 27, 2013.

Approximately ten property owners were present at city hall, along with several other community partners including San Marina Police Commander and Lighthouse’s Director of Social Services. The lead planner for this project presented the details of what was, at the time, a draft ordinance and opened the floor for questions and concerns.

Several owners discussed the effect that nearby homeless shelters would have on their ability to lease their properties. One owner explained that although he did not share these sentiments that there is a “stigma attached with homelessness.” Another owner felt, because of the nature of activity in an industrial zone, opening these areas up to more foot traffic would be a “safety issue.” He explained that the “commercial, loud activity” and “heavy trucks” opens up a “potential for lawsuits” if a homeless individual should get injured and that “the most uneducated person, if they see the opportunity, become the best lawyers.” Finally, a married couple discussed their frustration with the homeless individuals already in the area, camping on and near their property, and leaving garbage behind. The husband states, “my wife and I spend eight hours a month picking up after these people. I know they are just trying to get by but it’s a burden.” They expressed how an increase in homeless individuals would create further disorder.
In general, property owners were resistant to the possibility of homeless services in their area. Although they recognized homelessness as a problem and discussed how they were already affected, they did not support the idea that their neighborhood was the most appropriate place to offer services to address this problem. In fact, it was their belief that homeless assistance programs would only serve to exacerbate the negative consequences of homelessness for them. Their sentiments serve as a perfect example of NIMBYism and supported Dear’s (1992) findings that community member concerns regarding proposed neighborhood projects focus on the effects of these changes on property values, safety and overall neighborhood quality. However, despite property owner concerns, no changes were made to the language of the ordinance to accommodate this feedback.

**An Unlikely Pairing.** Bardach (1998) defines collaboration as “any joint activity by two or more agencies that is intended to increase public value by their working together rather than separately” (p. 8). The San Marina planners were engaged in what they referred to as a “collaborative process” with multiple agencies across the city and county. In the midst of this process, an unlikely alliance formed between Lighthouse and the San Marina planners. A partnership between these two entities may ultimately increase public value by providing better services to the homeless.

According to Lighthouse’s Director of Business and Operations, Lighthouse does not engage in collaborations with outside agencies as “extensively as [they] should, especially not during the building stage.” When asked why he explained:

*Partly because of the perception of internal capacity, that we have the resources that we need. And maybe because of some reputation issues that we didn't want to get involved with some entities, or feel obligation to do things a certain way. For*
example, the government, we tend to shy away from government funding, at least in Sunshine County, because we don't want restrictions on what we do.

In this case, however, Lighthouse does not have the “internal capacity” they need to complete this project and were initially hoping to have the city’s help with funding the project or providing land to build along with their approval.

San Marina had been previously uncooperative due, at least in part, to NIMBY attitudes described above. However, San Marina planners were motivated to engage in a collaboration with Lighthouse to satisfy SB 2 requirements. On November 5, 2012, members of the San Marina Planning Division met with members of Lighthouse’s administrative staff to define what this collaboration would entail. John, the Executive Director of the Planning Division for San Marina made it clear from the onset of the meeting that they were not willing to offer money or land, like Lighthouse had hoped:

We don’t see ourselves as ‘service providers.’ Even if we had the money to be service providers, which we don’t, we don’t see ourselves as ‘service providers.’

We see ourselves more in policy. We want to be partners and make sure we don’t miss opportunity.

Based on this statement, it is obvious that the city does not have the money or the desire to engage in providing a service. Instead, they would rather contract that service out to fulfill their state mandate. James supports this interpretation:

I think the goal of the collaboration is to get beds designated and built as quickly as possible to address the SB 2 requirements. That's what I think the main goal is and the main motivation in their collaborative efforts with us. They have a need and they've identified us as the best organization to help them fill that need, even
though we're just in the beginning stages of it. I think that's the motivation for the collaboration.

The city indicated that they might make some concessions in regards to zoning laws, so that Lighthouse can expand on site, instead of having to purchase more land:

John: Your use of that space is because you have been grandfathered in, even though you are in a different category, legally, in terms of zoning. [If you left that property], it would be a shame to lose that status. One thing we should talk about is how we could best maximize that space...

Melissa (Associate Planner for San Marina): The problem is that when you expand more than 10%, you lose your grandfathered status, which is something we have to work out.

An expansion of up to 10% means six more beds for the Lighthouse at the expense of over 5 million dollars (Director of Business and Operations, personal communication, November 14th, 2012). If the city can waive this zoning requirement, Lighthouse will not have to purchase new land and the city of San Marina will not have to find a new site to designate a homeless shelter to. Besides waiving this requirement, the Director of Business and Operations believes the San Marina planners will be available to lend their expertise:

What they are prepared to do for us to make that happen is to make allowances and some concessions possibly to make that process happen faster, and maybe to provide some resources to make that happen faster. But at this point I don't think those resources are going to be, I think those resources are going to be manpower and advice rather than money or land or anything like that. But they're certainly going to make their staff help in anyway they can.
Resource dependence theory states that an agency will surrender some autonomy in favor of collaboration if they depend on another agency for resources (Bardach, 1998). This is done by agencies to control uncertainties in the environment. According to Guo and Acar (2005), collaborations can take many forms, depending on what activities are being performed and the formality of these activities. For example, informal collaborations involve the short-term sharing of resources while formal collaborations require more long-term commitments and program merging. Resource dependence theory helps explain Lighthouse’s decision to engage in an informal collaboration with the city of San Marina on this project.

To summarize, the Lighthouse and the city of San Marina have different motivations for engaging in collaboration with each other. The Lighthouse does not make it a habit of partnering with government entities for fear of being regulated and losing control of their organization. However, because the city can share knowledge, manpower, waive certain zoning requirements, and, ultimately, provide them the approval they need to build their shelter, the Lighthouse feels they will benefit from a limited, short-term partnership with the city. The city of San Marina has been opposed to a new shelter in the past and currently does not want to be in the business of providing services to the homeless, but is mandated to do so by the state. Because Lighthouse is willing and able to take on this responsibility at a relatively low cost to the city, the city planners engaged in a limited, short-term partnership with Lighthouse.
On September 3, 2013, the ordinance was adopted (Planning and Building Agency, 2013). In the final version, also released in September, an addition was made to the ordinance as a result of the collaboration with Lighthouse. While the original version made no mention of emergency shelters outside the designated land use zones, the newer version included a section on the rehabilitation of emergency shelters already established, which accommodates expansion of the Haven House, from a 36 bed facility, to a 75 bed facility (see figure below).
Conclusions

In this chapter, I have discussed the adoption of Ordinance No. NS 2848, which designates specific zones categories where emergency shelters and other homeless services can be established without a conditional use permit or public interference. Because of this ordinance, Lighthouse was able to plan the expansion of Haven House with the city of San Marina’s blessing and insulated from NIMBY protestors.

Kingdon’s theory of agenda setting was useful in analyzing the various socio-political factors that formed a “window of opportunity” for this ordinance’s adoption. These factors include the recognition of (1) a lack of emergency shelter and (2) how NIMBY attitudes prevent the development of housing to meet homeless needs in a given community; the proposal to reform the current shelter system and create more shelter; and the passing of SB 2 which (1) compelled cities to finally make the appropriate accommodations in their general plan for emergency shelter and (2) disempowered NIMBY protestors. As previously described, San Marina has been resistant to expanding the services available to their homeless, partly due to
community pressure. However, understanding how these various factors converge brings to light how and why the adoption of this ordinance was possible in this moment in time and its potential role in improving and expanding the services available to the local homeless community.

**The Ordinance: Responsiveness to Proposed Solutions.** In this chapter, I provide the details of the ordinance and discuss its responsiveness to state, county, community, and service provider’s feedback and concerns. After reviewing the planning process and the final document, it is clear that San Marina planners successfully balanced state mandates and county and service provider feedback. The ordinance satisfies SB 2 mandates by designating enough land to homeless service provision to fill the now clearly defined need. The ordinance also addresses the goals of Sunshine County’s 2020 Plan, allowing for the development of a multi-service center to replace the Armories and smaller shelters to increase the number of beds offered by the city. Finally, the ordinance accommodates almost all service provider feedback allowing for flexible programming within the shelters and mandating storage space, activity rooms, and at least one shelter open 24-hours a day, among other provider requests.

As previously described in Chapter Two, Mitchell et. al (1997) argue that stakeholders are grouped together based on three attributes: power or an actor’s ability to carry out their own will or encourage a desired outcome; legitimacy or the belief that an actor’s claim to participate is appropriate based on a system of social norms; and urgency or the degree to which an actor’s claim is compelling or calls for immediate attention. In other words, the more attributes an actor possesses or accumulates, the more priority their claims will receive or the more stakeholder salience they will have. However, these authors note that stakeholders lacking power, even if they possess legitimacy and urgency, are classified as dependent, requiring the advocacy of more powerful groups to have their needs attended to.
Based on Mitchell et. al’s (1997) classification, it is not surprising that San Marina planners were responsive to the concerns of the state, Commission to End Homelessness, and service providers as all of these entities have power in this context. The power that states have over local and municipal governments is well established. The Commission to End Homelessness has been empowered and appointed by Sunshine County to provide oversight and accountability for county efforts to reduce homelessness. Finally, SB 2 requires cities to provide enough services to meet the needs of the homeless in their area but does not call for the distribution of additional funds and resources to do so. As such, in order for cities to comply with state mandates they must rely on service providers to satisfy the unmet need of the homeless community. This fact makes the city of San Marina dependent on service providers. Dependence gives service providers the power necessary to be included in this process.

Although San Marina planners successfully satisfied SB 2 mandates while incorporating feedback from Sunshine County and services providers, they were not responsive to the concerns of industrial property holders who felt that emergency shelter should be rezoned out of their “backyards.” Whether or not this lack of responsiveness is problematic is subject to interpretation. On the one hand, industrial property holders are directly affected by the ordinance, which should entitle them to a final say in how the ordinance took shape. On the other hand, my analysis of the industrial property owners meeting revealed that property owners adopted a NIMBY position. Property owners were ultimately concerned with the affect that the appearance of homeless services would have on their neighborhood and seemed not to consider larger community gains. As is characteristic of NIMBYists, property owners opposed perceived threats to their properties that seemed rooted more in anecdotal knowledge and stereotypes than fact.
Since San Marina planners were mandated by the state to establish zoning categories for homeless assistance programs and they believed that industrial areas were the most appropriate place to do so, the industrial property owners concerns went unaddressed. This goes against the long history of San Marina and Sunshine County yielding to NIMBY demands at the expense of providing effective social services. However, state requirements to include the ordinance in 2013’s Housing Elements and SB2’s protection from NIMBY pressures essentially disempowered property owners in this context. Because the ordinance protects the creation of homeless shelters in their own backyard, property owners will continue to be disempowered, at least until new Housing Elements are submitted in 2021. This, again, confirms the importance of power for establishing stakeholder salience.

Greater attempts could have been made to offer concessions to industrial property owners opposing this ordinance. One way to do this would have been to ask them what they would need to feel more comfortable with having an emergency shelter in their backyard and building these requests into the language of the ordinance. However, it is my belief that San Marina planners made the right decision to move forward with the completion of the ordinance.

Success of Lighthouse-City Partnership. Another component of the process discussed in this chapter was the short-term partnership between Lighthouse and San Marina planners. Both parties had been hesitant to work together in the past. However, resource dependence theory, which states that an agency will surrender some autonomy in favor of collaboration (Bardach, 1998), helps explain why both parties willingly entered into this partnership. Lighthouse needed the city’s expertise and permission to move forward with their plans for expanding Haven House. The city needed Lighthouse to provide more services to the homeless and did not want to invest the money and resources needed to do it themselves.
The right sociopolitical context created the opportunity for mutual dependence, resulting in a successful government-nonprofit partnership for several reasons. The first is that both partners, Lighthouse and the city government, shared the same goal for the partnership—establishing the ordinance. In the past, the city has had all of the power, preventing Lighthouse from improving and expanding their shelter. However, the changing socio-political climate described above put pressure on the city to improve the services available to their homeless population. Because the city did not have the resources to accomplish this on their own, they were in the unique position of having to depend on someone else. This dependence caused a transfer of some power from the city to Lighthouse, who could provide the resources they needed. As such, the second reason this partnership was successful is that each partner required the other to accomplish that goal, resulting in some shared power between Lighthouse and the city. This explanation is in keeping with the literature that highlights the importance of stakeholder power in decision-making (Mitchel, Agle & Wood, 1997). Stakeholders with power often get their needs attended to. It wasn’t until Lighthouse procured some power that they were finally able to gain city approval to expand Haven House. For a summary of factors contributing to a successful collaboration, please refer to Table 2.

Table 2: Factors Contributing to a Successful Collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Contributing to a Successful Collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔ The right context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Mutual dependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Shared goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Shared power</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Missing Seat at the Table. The city of San Marina was fairly inclusive in their efforts to create this ordinance. Also, the final ordinance, itself, addresses the needs and concerns of multiple stakeholders. However, one important stakeholder was notably absent from every stage of this process—the homeless or, as Ulrich (1987) would call them, the affected. As
experts in the field of service use and the actual users of the services the ordinance was created to protect, one could argue that they have the largest stake in the adoption of the ordinance. However, according to Mitchell et. al.’s (1997) work the homeless lack stakeholder salience.

The homeless have an urgent claim to participation (Mitchell et. al., 1997). In this context, however, the homeless may have been perceived by San Marina planners to lack legitimacy. The homeless’ perceived lack of legitimacy could be attributed to the historic exclusion of the poor in many political processes (Beresford & Croft, 1995; Boone, 1972). Because the exclusion of the poor is common-place, San Marina planners may have considered including the homeless in the collaborative process as a kind of norm violation, or, at the very least, unusual. Or, perhaps San Marina planners believed including service providers was a form of indirect participation, as providers work closely with the homeless population and can accurately represent their needs. This line of thinking ensures homeless dependence on the advocacy of more powerful and “legitimate” actors. It can also be argued that the homeless were not included in this process because they lack power. It is the exclusion of the homeless from these types of processes that continues to disempower this community. Ultimately, I can conclude from the data collected that the homeless are important stakeholders left out of this process. However, I cannot determine the motivations behind this because I was unable to interview San Marina planners.

Perhaps more alarming than the lack of inclusion of the homeless by the San Marina planners is that service providers did not consider including the homeless during this process. A review of the meeting notes from both Homeless Service Provider Stakeholder meetings reveal no mention of concern for the participation of the homeless. Concerns over including the public and community, however, were raised and strategies such as educating the public, creating
opportunities for the public to view new shelters, and having an “open door” policy were suggested (Planning and Building Agency, 2012 & 2013).

Some service providers work extremely closely with their clients, listening and attending to the needs of many individuals on a given day. This practice arguably makes service providers the best advocates and representatives of the homeless community in these types of processes. However, this argument—that the homeless have “good enough” representation through the service provider community—makes the homeless dependent on the advocacy of others, disempowers and delegitimizes this group. If this line of thinking persists, homeless participation in poverty alleviation efforts will seem unconventional, and maybe unwelcome, and ultimately illegitimate. If this line of thinking persists, the homeless will never have their own power but must rely on more powerful, sympathetic groups. If this line of thinking persists, the homeless community’s claims to participation in poverty alleviation efforts will not be considered salient by decision-makers and they will not be included.

My personal experience as a service provider and my research with service providers for this project informs me that it is not the intention of providers to disempower and delegitimize the homeless. In fact, the opposite is true. However, if those who have chosen to act in service to the homeless community do not recognize the importance of having the homeless (1) serve as their own advocates, (2) lend their own expertise to efforts to address their own needs, (3) get their own seat at the planning table, then what hope is there that the rest of the world will?

In Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework and Research Questions, I discuss the historic underrepresentation of the poor in poverty alleviation efforts. Failed attempts to incorporate the homeless in policy decisions date back to urban renewal projects in the 1950’s (Johnstone, 1958, p. 337). The debate around how to get the homeless involved in shaping the policies most
affecting them is not new. One of the largest hurdles is convincing policy-makers that there are benefits to including the homeless and other marginalized groups in decision-making. I propose that instead of seeking buy-in from the top, a better starting point is asking service providers to recognize these benefits and to practice inclusion in their own organizations. This may very well be the first step that will lead to farther-reaching efforts to include the homeless in local policy decisions. In the pages that follow, I will discuss my efforts to get one service provider, Lighthouse, to recognize the central argument driving this work—while designing services for the homeless is good, designing services with the homeless is better because it decreases barriers to service use and more effectively addresses the needs of this community—by encouraging a collaboration between the affected and the involved.
CHAPTER FIVE: THE AFFECTED

In previous chapters, I assert that the homeless not only have a clear stake in poverty alleviation efforts but that they are also experts in this area, due to their extensive knowledge and experiences using social services. According to Mitchell et. al. (1997) theory of stakeholder salience, stakeholders are attended to based on their possession of urgency, legitimacy, and power. In the case of Lighthouse’s new shelter, the homeless have urgent claim for participating in planning this new shelter. However, they have not been included in these efforts because they lack power and, arguably, legitimacy based on the poor’s historic underrepresentation in these processes. As a result, although they are affected by the decisions made and can bring their acquired knowledge to these decisions, they continue to be uninvolved in this process.

The goal of this phase was to encourage the representation of the affected by the involved in planning this shelter, resulting in a more just planning process and a more effective final product. Through out this project, I made a distinction between two types of representation—indirect representation and direct representation. *Indirect representation* involves a representation of the homeless’s thoughts, beliefs, ideas, knowledge, and experience conveyed to decision makers by a third party. Based on the evidence, it is possible that San Marina planners thought they were engaging in a type of informal indirect representation of the homeless by including service providers in the process for creating the ordinance. Indirect representation, referred to by Nutt (1999) as *token participation*, is less effective at producing sustainable decisions but is more commonly used by managers and decision makers. *Direct representation* involves the homeless interacting directly with and along side decision makers. Nutt (1999) refers to direct representation as *delegated, complete, or comprehensive participation*, depending
on the strategy that is used. These forms, although more affective, are rarely if ever implemented by managers or decision makers.

This chapter incorporates the indirect representation of the homeless in the planning process by determining how the homeless would plan for emergency shelter if they had the power to do so (a more direct forms of participation will be discussed in Chapter Six: The Involved). This investigation resulted in a model comparing service users’ perspectives of “ideal emergency shelter” to service providers’ proposed plans for the new emergency shelter. This model, Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter, will be described in more detail below.

The pages that follow reveal the results of my efforts to gather data for the model, as well as the final model, itself. The methods for capturing the service user perspective are detailed in the previous chapter. Methods and data sources for determining the service provider prospective are discussed later in this chapter. The following research questions were addressed: (1) What are the homeless’ experiences using emergency shelter? (2) What do the homeless like about emergency shelter? (3) What do the homeless dislike about emergency shelter? (4) Based on their experiences using the SAHH and other local shelters, what recommendations would the homeless make for improved service delivery? Homeless individuals recommendations will be presented as part of Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter.

Experiences of Service Users

According to the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients, about 73% of homeless individuals had stayed in a shelter during the time they were interviewed (Burt, Aron, Douglas, & Lee, 1999). In Sunshine County, only 38% of the homeless population stayed in a shelter, considerably lower than the national average\(^\text{18}\). The lower use can be attributed, at

\(^{18}\) In order to conceal the real name of the County, this source cannot be included in the reference list.
least in part, to the lack of available beds in the county. According to Sunshine County 2012 Housing Inventory Count Report, 2,337 shelter beds\textsuperscript{19} are available year-round in the County (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2012). However, this number is considerably lower than the 6,939 individuals estimated homeless\textsuperscript{20}. An additional contributing factor could be the difficulty homeless individuals experience accessing and using shelter effectively. The sections that follow discuss homeless individuals’ experiences using shelter and other homeless services, specifically their efforts to identify services, the importance of shelter for women’s well being, time as a function of successful shelter exits, and their experiences with a fragmented social service system.

**Identifying Services.** Women reported that once homeless, identifying services that met their needs was challenging (Perez, 2014). A majority of individuals did not learn about homeless assistance programs from formal avenues but, instead, from other homeless individuals. Unsheltered homeless individuals, in particular, learned about services from peers. Unsheltered women, being more isolated from services or providers, must rely more heavily on their social networks.

Men reported a similar experience receiving information. In the second focus group, men discussed how they rely on each other for valuable information that they have not received from Haven House:

*Steve: Its like everybody comes back with something positive and they try to help everybody else out, you know what I'm saying?*

\textsuperscript{19} This includes emergency shelters and transitional housing programs.

\textsuperscript{20} In order to conceal the real name of the County, this source cannot be included in the reference list.
Facilitator: So you think being in emergency shelter has exposed you to resources that you otherwise would not have been exposed to?

Steve: Right. I've never filed for work related injuries, I always thought 'well, I can do this, I can do that.' Now I'm on disability. I didn't know that those avenues were open to me but they are and that is what I am doing now.

Facilitator: How did you get exposed to those things? Was it other guests? Was it a social worker.....

Steve: A friend of mine told me....A gentleman today that I met in this place said that I could get an additional $400 a month and I will talk to that person later. Everybody tries to help each other in this place.

Facilitator: It sounds like you have gotten resources maybe from other guests staying in the program?

Steve: I have had more help from the people in this room right here than I have from any staff.

Based on this interaction, it seems that Haven House indirectly provides information and resources by serving as a venue where peers can come together and share their knowledge with each other. Haven House, as a result, is an informal facilitator of valuable peer support. However, the social services staff and shelter staff are not seen as particularly useful in directly disseminating needed information:

The staff, I feel, should be in tune with it. Instead its like 'I've got my job, I don't care.' That's not great. There is not a person in here, I don't think, that has not told someone where they can go to seek shelter if you are put out of here. You have people leaving and this is their last night here. And where are they going
to go, if they listen to the staff? But if they listen to the people that are in here, they might know where to get some help.

The experiences of these men and women suggest the value of relying on peers for information about services, especially when more formal avenues (social service providers) either fail or are not available. Information regarding services seemed especially important for women, to help them avoid living on the streets.

**Perceived Importance of Shelter for Women: Dangers of the Street.**

“Almost all of the women interviewed, including unsheltered individuals, had negative feelings about living on the streets. Sheltered women referred to sleeping outside as ‘frightening’ and ‘as bad as you can get.’ Unsheltered women discussed how they ‘will never get used to’ living on the streets and that there is a lack of ‘comfort’ and ‘safety’ associated with this circumstance” (Perez, 2014, p. 262). One woman discussed the very real fear of getting raped while on the streets, while several women actually reported that they had been raped while they were unsheltered. Only one woman was indifferent to where she slept because “bad things” are just as likely to happen in a shelter as they are on the street. Ultimately she admitted that she preferred to stay in a shelter because she likes staying out of the rain.

Men corroborated the dangers of women staying on the street and added that living on the street encourages women to engage in more risky behavior, such as drug use. Some men in the focus group even expressed that they would gladly give up their bed for a family in need:

*Participant 9: I would spend a month on the street for a family to stay in here and didn't have to suffer.*
Participant 11: I don't think there is a man in here that wouldn't stand aside, I know I would. I have a tent in my car. I would give up my bed for a family. And I am pretty sure that other people here would feel the same way.

These sentiments echo women’s fears about staying on the street and further highlight men’s perceived importance of emergency shelter to women’s emotional and physical well-being. In fact, men perceive shelter as so crucial to the well-being of women that some would voluntarily sacrifice their own comfort and security for the comfort and security of women and children.

**Time as a Function of Success: Length of Shelter Stay.** Length of stay was a popular topic for women and men, as both groups discussed time in a shelter as crucial to moving out of homelessness. Maggie, for instance, does not feel that Haven House is conducive to helping people exit homelessness because guests are only permitted there for small stints every month:

*It’s really hard to get anything done to get yourself out of a situation like that.*

*[You] kinda need like a home base, that you have, that you know it’s a safe place to go to consistently. Not just for seven days. Cause when I was staying there at, when I was staying there, they were only doing it for seven days for women and it seemed like that all it really is is just like a small reprieve for people that are chronically homeless instead of an actual stepping stone to get out of being homeless.*

Men shared these sentiments, although, at the time of both focus groups, the length of stay was extended to 14 days. Most individuals agreed that 14 days was not enough time to “*bring a person from nothing to something.*” One reason being that it first takes some time for individuals
to acclimate to staying at the shelter and get their bearings. One individual referred to this period, which lasts for about a week, as “climatiz[ing]”:

*By the time you climatize by that first week, you’ve already gone through seven days.*

*By the time you start to make a plan to get back on your feet, you’re out. So it’s a very small, small window of time.*

Alan, a long-time Haven House user, referred to this week as the length of time needed to determine that he is safe—“it takes you a week just to realize, ‘okay, I am in a safe place where I can leave my stuff and start thinking about moving forward.” For women, climatizing can take longer than a week. When asking Pam about the services she needs, she responded—“there are a lot of things I know that I need help with and when you have trauma, you need a few weeks to reajust.” Pam, who was forced to leave the home she was staying in with her mother after her passing, feels that she cannot begin to determine the services she needs until she has had several weeks to process her loss and adjust to her new circumstances.

Most individuals felt that a longer length of stay is needed in order to make any significant change in their life. For men “14 days is impossible if they (Lighthouse) are really trying to make this place (Haven House) more than just a roof over your head.” However, several men expressed that not getting enough time in a shelter to solve their issues would result in them “going back out there (the street) and starting all over again.” As a result, men continue to cycle in and out of the shelter:

*Fourteen days doesn’t give you enough time, that’s just a turnover time and by the time those 14 days are up, you’re back in here because you don’t have the time to work with what you need to work with to get back on your feet.*
The lack of time emergency shelter provides coupled with the resources provided to only address basic needs makes it difficult for homeless men and women to move forward with their lives. Research on shelter use patterns reveals the prevalence of homeless individuals cycling in and out of programs. One study found New York emergency shelter readmission rates to be three times higher than first time admissions (Culhane, Dejowski, Ibanez, & Needham, 1994). In Sunshine County, 34% of single adults who exited homelessness into permanent housing returned to emergency shelter in less than a year (HMIS Data). These experiences seem to indicate that although emergency shelter is desperately needed, it only serves as a temporary reprieve from some of the daily struggles encountered by the homeless.

**Service Fragmentation.** The preliminary study described in *Chapter Three: Methodology* discusses the many barriers women face to successfully accessing and using emergency shelter. These barriers include negative past experiences using services, not knowing about available services, pressure to stay with a partner, unprofessional staff, lack of options, and not qualifying for services. Men also discussed some of these barriers, namely issues with staff and not knowing about available services. However, men provided an interesting contribution to the discussion of barriers to accessing emergency shelter by highlighting a popular critique of the social service system—service fragmentation (Gelberg, Brownder, Lejano, Elena, & Arangua, 2004; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2010). It is born from an uncoordinated and disjointed social service system where services are spread across a large geographic area with different admission processes and requirements for each (Blue-Howells, McGuire, & Nakashima, 2008). Other characteristics include services delivered by a variety of agencies that rarely communicate, a lack of standardized application forms, and long time frames for receiving services (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2010).
I’ve done a lot of walking in the last few days and there are a lot of service centers in Sunshine County but most of them tell you to come here and here they tell you to go there. They are not coordinated and, pretty much, most of them do almost the same thing. So everyone is competing for the homeless and they don’t share that information with each other.

Neil, who recently came to Sunshine County from Australia, shared how this reality can be particularly frustrating when trying to access services:

There is a lot of good resources out there in the neighboring city as well, like…..medical, anything you can want if you can get there on time. First you have to find out where the resources are, then you have to figure out when they are available, maybe for a couple of hours, once or twice a week. And then you get there and the time has changed. They are no longer doing it on Saturday. There is a lot of outdated information out there. Its almost like their should be some kind of governing body that could just put together an up to date database so people would know where to start. For people that could do the research themselves, it would save them a lot of time because I ended up just getting frustrated.

Interfacing on a daily basis with this institutional barrier can leave men feeling powerless:

When you have people who’s cell phone has a little bit of minutes, they really are trying to help themselves, but they end up, like he said, like a ship without a ruder going in circles. You end up just giving up.
Amidst their frustration with using services, homeless men describe feeling stuck, despite attempts to make progress or improve their situation. Over time, men begin to feel defeated by a situation that seems much larger than they can control.

**Conclusion.** Men and women report experiences of using services that are characterized by frustration. They discuss being unaware of the services available to them. To acquire information regarding available services, they rely on their peers and not social services providers, who they feel fail them often. They believe that emergency shelter provides reprieve from staying outside, which they acknowledged as dangerous, especially for women. However, men and women face many barriers to accessing shelter including service fragmentation. When they do access emergency shelter, they are not provided with enough time and the resources necessary to transcend their situation. As a result, they exit the shelter with the knowledge that they must endure the same struggle, all over again, to stay off of the streets.

**Emergency Shelter: What Service Users Like**

Men and women were asked to discuss what they like about emergency shelter and other services for the homeless. Despite their frustrations accessing and using services, men and women discussed multiple benefits or positive aspects of using shelter. These benefits could be categorized as either satisfying a physical or emotional need.

**Satisfying Physical Needs.** Because men and women perceive emergency shelter as a place to get basic needs met, when homeless men and women were asked what they like about using emergency shelter, both groups focused on how well emergency shelters satisfied these physical needs. Most commonly, men and women reported liking food, showers, and a bed and/or place to rest. Neil explained how priorities change once you become homeless while men discussed the quality of the showers at Haven House—“In most shelters, that is what
people speak about the most. The food is up there but it’s the quality of the showers that people...its funny how certain things become more important than others.” Neil seems to acknowledge that what once seemed mundane, like a good shower, becomes a luxury once becoming homeless. Women also placed a strong value on physical comforts that most of us take for granted. While explaining Haven House’s shelter to Trudy who had been sleeping on a mat at the Armory, she was in disbelief when I mentioned the possibility of sleeping in a bed:

Trudy:  A real bed?!? Like a mattress?!!

Interviewer:  It’s a mattress, definitely. I don’t know if it’s the bed you are used to but....

Trudy:  Oh my god!! I haven’t slept in a bed in six weeks!!! Wooooooowwwwww.

I had no idea.

Even though men and women most frequently cited the food, showers, and beds as aspects about emergency shelter that they appreciated, women also discussed receiving clothing donations as something they liked, although with less frequency. However, several men discussed the importance of having a place to store their belongings:

As a good experience, I think having the safety of leaving your stuff behind and knowing it will be there when you get back. I think that right there leaves a person to focus on what he needs to get done.

In this quote, Ron, a guest at Haven House, describes that the peace of mind that comes with not having to worry about what to do with one’s belongings, allows him to focus his energy on other pressing matters.

Satisfying Emotional Needs. Along with satisfying basic, physical needs, both men and women appreciated the safety that emergency shelter provided. For Elizabeth, a victim
of rape staying at a women’s shelter, feeling safe at a shelter is dependant on her proximity to men:

But this is very nice here [at this shelter], you know? There is food and shelter and you feel safe which is really important. A year ago...I was a victim of a date rape drug. I was assaulted and raped in a motel up there. So for a good year, I haven’t felt safe, and when there are men around I really don’t feel safe. So this environment is nice and safe. So over at Haven House, you know you feel relatively safe because you are in off the street and the men are contained and they never come back where the women are, and I always felt safe.

For other women, such as Jacee, a safe environment promotes physical and emotional health. When I asked her what factors she considered important when selecting homeless services she indicated the importance of cleanliness and counseling:

I think that um really clean you know. Being able to wash your clothes um... I don’t know, you know? Just, ugh... having a healthy environment! How about that? I think counseling is important sometimes. I think counseling helps you put your cards on the table and helps you ‘cause I have a lot on my plate um I’ve not been into counseling but I think sometimes it’s nice to talk to somebody and be able to say “hey this is where I’m at.”

Based on these women’s responses it seems that although it was common for women to consider a healthy and safe environment important, what creates a healthy and safe environment is subjective. For Jacee, cleanliness and counseling create a safe, healthy environment. Elizabeth, on the other hand, feels safe in an environment free of men, who she considers threatening.
Men also appreciate the safety that emergency shelter provides. While women discussed how therapeutic, clean, and women-centered environments promote safety, it seems that the stability that emergency shelter provides help men feel safe. Men discussed the importance of having a place to stay for an extended period of time to relax, unwind, and finally have the opportunity to address other issues besides meeting basic needs in order to survive from day to day. Michael discussed how short-stay shelters do not provide enough stability to accomplish these things—“Yeah, its great to have somewhere to get back on your feet. Having experienced some of the day shelters, you have more of a base, at least for two weeks. You have somewhere to leave your bags and you can act like a normal human being.” In fact, he attributes an extended stay at a shelter as a way to recapture a feeling of “normalcy” that is otherwise missing. Others feel that an extended stay gives them more opportunities to put their life in order:

*When I first started coming here it was three nights available, then seven, and now [I’ve] discovered its 14 days, which is excellent. It really gives at least me a chance to organize my life and try to put myself back together.*

In this quote, a returning guest of Haven House is describing how, over time, the length of stay at the shelter has increased from three days to fourteen. This change finally allows him to address higher level needs like piecing together his life.

**Conclusion.** What men and women report as positive aspects of emergency shelter are in keeping with their understanding of what emergency shelter provides. Mostly, they discussed how well their basic needs were being met. Men and women seemed to appreciate those experiences that the housed may take for granted—a warm meal, good shower, and a bed to sleep in. As such, they liked that emergency shelter was able to satisfy these experiences. Men and women also reported enjoying the safety that emergency shelter provides. However,
participants had different ideas about what aspects of emergency shelter helped them feel safe. For women who had experienced past trauma at the hands of men, being off the street and surrounded by women created a safe environment. For others, an opportunity to talk to someone and receive counseling created a feeling of safety. For men, the stability that emergency shelter can provide, compared to life on the street, helped them feel safe to finally relax and begin to sort through the pieces of their lives.

**Emergency Shelter: What Service Users Dislike**

Men and women were also asked what they disliked about emergency shelter. For women, there was less agreement regarding what they disliked about emergency shelter than there was over what they do like. Most of their negative responses towards emergency shelter were directed at the process of accessing shelter (as discussed in Chapter Three: Methodology). Once there, women did not have much to dislike, with the exception of having to leave the shelter during the day. This may be attributable to the limited amount of services women understand emergency shelter to provide, creating relatively low expectations. Men seemed to also have this understanding and focused more on what emergency shelter did not provide for them as opposed to disliking what it did.

**Leaving During the Day.** Women disliked leaving the shelter during the day because they did not want to leave the comfort and convenience that the shelter provided. Some men also dislike leaving the shelter for the day. For instance, one man reported struggling to find something productive to occupy the time when he is not allowed to be in the shelter:

*During the day we have to leave at seven in the morning and come back at four.*

*There is absolutely nothing to do besides go to the library or go to the park.*
You’re only allowed one bus pass a week and I got business to take care of while I’m not doing anything.

Because the shelter only has the resources to give out one bus pass to guests per week, guests are limited mostly to places within walking distance from the shelter during their stay. In this case, this gentleman had hoped to take care of more “business” during the day.

**What Was Missing.** Despite the few men who mentioned disliking that the shelter was closed during the day, men mostly discussed their desire for additional services not currently provided by emergency shelter. While men appreciated how well emergency shelter satisfied their basic needs, they expressed their desire to receive information and resources to help address the underlying causes perpetuating their homelessness. Carl discussed receiving resources from another organization, Veteran’s Now, that he thinks could easily be offered to guests of Haven House:

*I am an ex veteran and I go to Veteran’s Now in San Marina when I leave every morning. And what they offer there they can offer to everybody here that is not a veteran in this place. You don’t have to be a veteran to get the resources I get at the veteran’s place. For instance…..there is a grant that everyone here can apply for called FAFSA. They give you money to go to school and a lot of money could be left over for your expenses, cost of living and all that stuff. They don’t tell you any of that here [at Haven House]. Also, I found a part time job…from a career job list that they have at Veteran’s Now. I am sure that all these companies are also going to hire people that are not veterans. So, there is a lot more they (Haven House staff) can do for everybody here that could be helpful and make it a
much quicker time for people to recover, to get back on their feet if they were to offer these little, tiny resources that could be very helpful to the individual.

In this quote, Carl discusses receiving information about funding and job opportunities from another service provider. Based on his experiences, he believes that making these opportunities available to shelter guests can help them “recover” from homelessness.

Alan, who stayed at the Haven House 30 years ago echoed similar sentiments as Carl by discussing how the shelter used to provide more comprehensive services and how important it is for them to continue doing so today:

I used this shelter back in the 80’s.....At the time the shelter offered more back then. I remember going in the back, they had more things to offer and would do things right then. I remember the first time I came here they helped me get my ID, things like that, right away, it wasn’t put off like today, okay?.....So the benefits then are better than now and that’s what led me to state that they need a one-stop shop center. That’s pretty much what they need to get you in and get you out....I came here and I don’t know anything. I haven’t been here in many, many years. I live here now, so I ‘m like stuck. Where do I go for this? Where do I go for that?......In the process of that, you sit back and if you don’t know where to go, you are like a ship without some sort of navigational system, so you’re just in circles. They used to have something similar to that here, they need to bring it back, that’s my point. You’d be surprised that the unemployment department will work hand and hand with the people there. Speaking to you in terms of FAFSA, every one here is entitled to the Pell Grant. I picked up an associates degree, I have an A.S. in Civil Engineering and a B.S. in Construction Management and I
am still in school. The fact of the matter is its still available but if you do not know it than you do not get it. And what I am saying is to have a more informational center providing the things that individuals need. A person with a job already needs to know where he can find housing. ‘Well, what’s my next step?’ Because people come here and they don’t know.....It needs to be informative enough to give an individual some kind of direction of where they need to go on what stage that they are at. If they could do that, quite naturally, it benefits everyone, because it gets everyone in and out an back into society working.....So the services that used to be available to people, Sunshine County used to be real top on that, back in the 80’s, they were really good. They’re slacking, I’ll just be honest with you. To bring back these various programs, or even get people that are involved, an information center is what you need.

While discussing the decline in services in Sunshine County that he has experienced, Alan also highlights several holes in the provision of emergency shelter and ways he feels they can be filled. Alan wishes that emergency shelter can serve as what is sometimes called a “one-stop” center, where multiple, comprehensive services are provided under one roof. He presents getting a replacement identification card, educational resources, and housing referrals as examples of the types of services that would be helpful to the homeless. He also talks about the value of receiving information about these opportunities because “if you do not know it you do not get it.” He envisions, like Carl, that emergency shelter can serve as an “information center” so that the homeless can learn and ultimately benefit from the availability of services. Finally, he discusses how the homeless have different needs and that emergency shelter should take an individualized approach to serving their guests, understanding where each one is in the process of exiting
homelessness to provide them with the most relevant information and resources to meet their needs.

**Conclusion.** In general, men and women did not dislike many aspects of emergency shelter. In fact, some showed obvious discomfort about expressing anything but gratitude for the services they are provided. Although women focused their complaints about emergency shelter on the process of attaining it, once they did attain it, they most commonly disliked having to leave the shelter during the day. Some men also disliked this. Men, instead of focusing on what they did not like about the services they were being provided, discussed how they wished services could be extended to be more helpful to them. Specifically, they want to receive more information, resources, and referrals from providers that can move them out of homelessness. In other words, they wanted not just to be stored, but restored.

**Lighthouse’s Vision For Improved Shelter**

As stated above, the final model was derived from both service users and service provider’s ideals for emergency shelter. Up to this point, I have discussed the findings from interviews and focus groups with service users which reveal their priorities for emergency shelter. Because Lighthouse is actually providing a new emergency shelter for the homeless, their priorities for shelter are explicitly stated. The following paragraphs discuss Lighthouse’s purpose and goals for their new shelter as stated in their new shelter’s program proposal (Appendix B).

In order to implement a new service or program, Lighthouse must submit a program proposal to Lighthouse’s Western Territory Headquarters for approval. This proposal must detail the new program’s purpose and goals, target population, funding sources, personnel and facility needs, intended affect, evaluation and monitoring plan, and spiritual emphasis, among
other requirements (Lighthouse, 2013). In their proposal, Lighthouse identify several priorities in their purpose statement:

“Purpose: To build and operate a Christian-based emergency housing facility that will meet the restorative needs of a wide, flexible scope of single homeless men as the part of the mission of [Lighthouse] and the objectives of [Sunshine County’s] 2020 Plan to End Homelessness.”

In this statement alone, Lighthouse identifies their target population—single homeless men, their dedication to both their organizational mission and county homeless initiatives such as the 2020 Plan, and their intention for this facility to keep Lighthouse’s spiritual focus.

The proposal for the new shelter also lists several goals for this new facility. Along with their intention to serve single homeless men and to provide spiritual programming in keeping with their organizational mission and county homeless initiatives, Lighthouse outlines several programming goals. These goals include assessing client needs for next step housing, expanding their current services, helping clients secure employment, providing support for addiction recovery, and collaborating with community partners to strengthen case management. Along with programming goals, Lighthouse intends to develop relationships with their neighborhood association, establish a flexible, safe facility that can accommodate various homeless subpopulations, and meet the requirements set forth by the ordinance (see previous chapter).

In order to construct a list of ideal emergency shelter from the perspective of the organization, I referenced two organization documents. Along with the program proposal for the new shelter, I used a list entitled Design Items for Architect that was presented to the board on November 14, 2013 (Appendix C). This list was compiled by Lighthouse’s County Coordinator, the Director of Social Services, the Shelter Manager, the Director of Business and Operations,
and the Chair of the Program Committee as a vision for what they would like their new emergency shelter to be. These documents were chosen because they aggregate the priorities of multiple stakeholders within Lighthouse and will directly inform the construction and design of the new shelter.

The Model: Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter

The final model is a comparison of ideal emergency shelter characteristics from three perspectives—female services users, male service users, and Lighthouse. It is thus entitled, Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter. Interview questions that asked women to discuss what they like and dislike about emergency shelter, the benefits of staying in emergency shelter, factors most important to them in selecting services to use, and services they wish the county would better provide were used to construct women’s list of ideal characteristics. These interviews were also coded for any time women mentioned something they desired in an emergency shelter. If a characteristic was mentioned by at least three women, it made it to the final model.

Men were also asked in focus groups what they like and dislike about emergency shelter, the benefits of using emergency shelter, but were also specifically asked ways that Haven House could improve their program and facilities, and what an ideal emergency shelter would be like for them. The focus group transcripts were also coded for any time men mentioned something they desired in an emergency shelter. Anytime something was mentioned by one participant and agreed on by at least two more (as indicated by other participants following up on the same sentiment, verbal agreement, or non-verbal nodding), it was included in the final model.

Men and women were asked about their abstract vision for emergency shelter given that they had the power to provide services. However, Lighthouse does have the power to design and
provide emergency shelter. As such, the organizational documents described above were coded for organization priorities. These priorities were included in the final model. Figure 1 captures stakeholder ideals for emergency shelter, showing where the groups overlap and where they differ.
Figure 9: Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter
A total of fifty-two ideals or priorities emerged from the data. Thirty-one ideals were reported by one stakeholder group, sixteen ideals were shared by two stakeholder groups, and five were shared by all three stakeholder groups. All stakeholders believe that emergency shelter should provide a healthy, safe environment for homeless individuals to shower, store their belongings, stay for a period longer that 14 days, receive job services and have access to computers (please refer to Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Stakeholder Groups</th>
<th>Name of Stakeholder Groups</th>
<th>Ideals</th>
<th>Percent of Total Ideals</th>
<th>Total By Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One group</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Religious services optional; build social support and community; women and couples served; affordable housing; flexible program; clothing donation</td>
<td>~11.5%</td>
<td>~64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>All those in need served; place to meditate; birth certificate and ID recovery; information center; individual assessment; game and leisure room; multi-service center; make contribution to the shelter; fully air conditioned; well ventilated</td>
<td>~20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lighthouse</td>
<td>75 beds; elevator; two stories; ADA accessible; surveillance/security staff; restrooms on both floors; semi-private sleeping units; flexible facility; indoor/outdoor recreation space; lounges; next-step housing; staff office space; chapel; multi-purpose dinning room; open feel; Christ-centered; outcomes evaluated</td>
<td>~32.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Groups</td>
<td>Women and Men</td>
<td>Improved staff quality; couples served; bus passes; updated resources provided; comforts of home; stay during the day</td>
<td>~12%</td>
<td>~26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women and Lighthouse</td>
<td>Laundry facilities for guests; counseling; outreach services; case management</td>
<td>~8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men and Lighthouse</td>
<td>Covered intake area; cohesive services; men served</td>
<td>~6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, more than half of service users’ ideals were shared by at least one other group while less than half of service provider ideals were, as seen in Table 4 below. In other words, providers’ ideals for emergency shelter diverge more from their clients’ ideals than clients’ ideals diverge from each other and the providers. This trend suggests that service users’ priorities are more aligned with service provider priorities while service providers are less aligned with the priorities of their clients. This can be explained, in part, because Lighthouse’s priorities are shaped by their power to make whatever decisions they feel are appropriate regarding service design and delivery. Service users, on the other hand, lack power and their ideals are shaped by the services that they have experience receiving; services that they have depended on others to make available to them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Number of Reported Ideals</th>
<th>Number of Shared Ideals (1+ groups)</th>
<th>Percentage of Shared Ideals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighthouse</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not surprising, there are slightly more similarities in ideals or priorities between client groups than between either client group and Lighthouse. Although men and women differ in how they experience the world and homelessness, they still share many experiences and needs.
These experiences and needs shape their ideals for emergency shelter. There were also slightly more similarities between Lighthouse and their female clients, than Lighthouse and their male clients. This may be problematic because the two groups that had the least alignment in ideals for emergency shelter will be most involved in the new emergency shelter. As such, Lighthouse’s new shelter, may not be satisfying all of their clients needs.

Although most of the ideals reported were not shared between groups, this may not be major cause for concern. Ideals, while different, rarely directly conflict except over the population that the new shelter should serve and whether the shelter should have a religious focus. As such, decision-making between these two groups could be a relatively fluid process due to their complimentary and sometimes shared vision for emergency shelter.

In general service users tended to focus more on programmatic aspects of emergency shelter. Women want a place that builds social support and community and provides counseling, case management, and outreach services. Men want a place that provides them with information and multiple, needed services under one roof such as helping them secure employment documents (birth certificates and identification cards). Both client groups want to be exposed to competent and friendly staff, updated resources, and small comforts of home (TV, food, bed).

Service providers, on the other hand, focused more on facilities and the physical structure of the new building which should be comfortable, flexible, and safe. These tendencies and the fact that the design for the building has already been agreed on by the organization and approved by the city of San Marina, create an opportunity for client participation on this project. Lighthouse would be well served by engaging male service user’s in discussions over programmatic aspects of the new shelter. Collaboration between these two groups is especially
important since the model has highlighted that their ideals are the least aligned between all three groups.

**Conclusion**

*Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter* has been used throughout this project in several ways. First, this model served as a guide for me during interactions with and recommendations to with Lighthouse (these interactions and recommendations will be explained in more detail in the next chapter). Secondly, I presented this model to Program Committee members to inform their planning decisions as they moved forward with the new shelter project. During this presentation, I primed the committee with research about the organizational benefits of client participation in decision making, in the hopes that they would incorporate the priorities of their clients into future planning efforts for this shelter. Then, I presented the results of the model. Committee members were extremely interested in hearing more about the organizational benefits of incorporating client participation into decision-making, asked several follow up questions, and requested to receive more information about the research that has been conducted in this area. Unfortunately, the content of the model, itself, did not appear of interest to committee members and was never mentioned or referenced by them again.

After the presentation, however, the Director of Social Services and the staff representative of the Program Committee approached me about the model. She assured me that administrative staff at Haven House had already begun discussing some of men’s ideals, including the integration of more information and resource sharing into the new shelters programming. She also mentioned the Shelter Manager’s desire to incorporate more client feedback into program planning. This conversation marked the beginning of the development of two initiatives to incorporate more direct and systematic forms of representation for the homeless
in organizational decision making. These initiatives will be discussed more thoroughly in

*Chapter Six: The Involved.*
CHAPTER SIX: THE INVOLVED

This chapter describes my efforts to encourage Lighthouse—the involved—to embrace a more collaborative planning process that includes participation from homeless clients—the affected. As defined in Chapter Four: The City, collaboration is “any joint activity by two or more [entities] that is intended to increase public value by their working together rather than separately” (Bardach, 1998, p.8). I have already argued that the homeless, because they are affected by decisions being made, are experts in the field of service use, and have an urgent (and arguably legitimate) claim to participate, as stakeholders in the new emergency shelter. In this chapter, I evaluate the effectiveness of my efforts as a change agent and address the following questions: (1) What factors facilitate client participation? (2) What factors constrain client participation in the planning process?

In the pages that follow, I describe how my role as a change agent influenced Lighthouse’s planning practices. Next, I discuss my attempt to implement three initiatives intended to promote client participation within the organization. Finally, I use my experiences attempting to implement these initiatives and findings from Chapter Four: The City, to draw conclusions about the factors that facilitate or constrain participation based on my implementation efforts.

Channels of Influence

A major assumption guiding this project was that through my involvement and encouragement of client participation, I would be able to effect some change in Lighthouse’s planning process now and in the future. There are two reasons why I was uniquely situated to adopt the role of a change agent. First, through previous research efforts, I have an understanding of homeless clients’ perspectives on service use. This understanding enabled me
to make informed recommendations during Program Committee meetings and other interactions with Lighthouse. The second reason is that through my multi-year involvement with Lighthouse, I developed rapport with members of this organization. In other words, I assumed that I had the proximity necessary to make recommendations and that I had established enough credibility that my recommendations would be considered; on some occasions, sought; and perhaps, eventually implemented. My time in the field confirmed this assumption and on multiple occasions my recommendations were considered, and sometimes actively sought. Later in this chapter, I will detail the extent to which my recommendations were implemented.

In order to create change, I set out to development two channels of influence within the organization at the onset of this project. The main channel of influence I proposed was through my involvement with the Program Committee. As a member of this committee, I was involved in the decisions that were made (i.e.: recommendations for temporary shelter locations, relocation of transitional housing program). These decisions are shared as official recommendations to the Advisory Board.

Another channel of influence that I tried to develop was direct involvement with the Advisory Board. My first attempt was through a request to the County Coordinator to address the Advisory Board with a 3-5 minute presentation of research that I had compiled about the organizational benefits of incorporating client feedback into decision making (see Initiative 4 in Table 1). I had previously presented information to the Program Committee about this topic as an introduction to the Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter model (see Initiative 3 in Table 1). Based on the interest from board members on the Program Committee, I submitted a request along with the endorsement of three advisory board members. One advisory board member stated in her endorsement:
“In addition to the Program and Property Committees, it is important for the Board at large to have an understanding of client impact of our services and how they are delivered. Incorporating this into our building and program plans is a way to make our programs even more effective” (Advisory Board and Program Committee Member, personal communication, April 11, 2014).

After two months and two follow up emails I received a response denying this request. Instead the County Coordinator stated “this is the information that is beneficial for the Program Committee to consider and then recommendations can be made to the board through the Program Chair Person if it needs to be elevated up to that level” (County Coordinator, personal communication, June 6, 2014). He also denied my request to meet to discuss this matter in person.

My second attempt was to join the Advisory Board. The purpose of joining the board was to secure my attendance at board meetings and a substantial role in decision-making. At an Advisory Board meeting on April 10, 2014, the County Coordinator discussed the retirement of several board members prompting the Nominations Committee to recruit and select new members. Board members discussed their desire for more community members outside of the organization to serve on their board and one member suggested “we might want to recruit younger people and make payments (member dues) less for them.” I submitted a request to the Chair of the Nominations Committee for consideration; however, I was not selected to join. Eventually, as discussed in Chapter Three: Methodology, I was disinvented from attending Advisory Board Meetings on November 14, 2014.
Figure 1 provides a conceptual map of the two proposed channels of influence I just described. The straight arrows represent my participation in Program Committee meetings which influenced how decisions were made. Program committee decisions were, when relevant, shared with the Advisory Board. The curved, broken arrow represents my unsuccessful attempts to directly influence the Advisory Board and the decisions being made at that level. At the conclusion of this chapter, I will present a revised model that illustrates the development of new channels of influence.

**Initiatives for Client Participation**

During my 21 months of fieldwork, I introduced seven distinct *initiatives for client participation*. These initiatives took several forms including client feedback gathering efforts, reports, and presentations. They also represent both types of client representation. In Chapter Five: *The Affected*, I distinguish between *indirect representation*, or using a third party to convey the homeless’s thoughts, beliefs, ideas, knowledge, and experience, and *direct representation*, the homeless interacting directly with and along side decision makers. Nutt’s (1999) research on
client participation in organizational decision making reveals that strategies that capture direct representation, while more effective at creating sustainable decisions, are less used by managers for fear of losing control over decision-making. This was the case at Lighthouse, as discussed in more detail below. Although initiatives for direct client representation more closely resemble collaborations, in the interest of increasing my chances that these initiatives would be accepted and implemented by Lighthouse, I first attempted several initiatives for participation that indirectly represented the homeless in the planning process. The final initiative proposed, however, sought to directly involve the homeless in organizational decision-making. As such, this final initiative most resembles a collaborative relationship.

Table 5: Initiatives for Client Participation. Note: Initiatives 1, 6, and 7 are discussed in more detail in this chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Representation</th>
<th>Accepted</th>
<th>Implemented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Focus Groups: Male Clients - Storing the Homeless</td>
<td>Information Gathering, Full report</td>
<td>Homeless Services Division</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Summary: Storing the Homeless Report</td>
<td>Advisory Board</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter Presentation</td>
<td>Program Committee</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Organizational Benefits of Client Participation Presentation</td>
<td>Advisory Board</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Joining the Advisory Board Initiative, Application</td>
<td>Advisory Board</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Bi-Monthly Client Focus Groups Proposal, Presentation</td>
<td>Program Committee</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Homeless Representative on Program Committee Proposal, Presentation</td>
<td>Program Committee</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 provides the details of all of the distinct initiatives for client participation that I introduced to Lighthouse, including what form the initiative took, to whom the initiative was proposed (audience), whether the homeless would be indirectly or directly involved in the
initiative, if the initiative was verbally accepted by the organization, and whether the initiative was acted upon or if a change in the organization occurred as a result of the initiative (implementation). The table reveals that four out of the seven initiatives were accepted but only one was actually implemented. As such, my attempts to encourage a more collaborative planning process within the organization were mostly unsuccessful. However, failures as well as successes reveal important implications for future attempts to encourage collaborations between the involved and the affected.

In the pages that follow, I will describe Initiatives 1, 6, and 7 in more detail. Initiative 1, *Focus Groups: Male Clients – Storing the Homeless*, was chosen because it is the only initiative that was implemented during my time in the field. Initiatives 6 and 7, *Client Bi-Monthly Focus Groups* and *Homeless Representative on the Program Committee* were also chosen because they were both proposed at the same time, use different forms of client representation, and each had a different outcome. Comparing these two initiatives reveals what makes an initiative more likely to be accepted by Lighthouse.

**Focus Groups: Male Clients.** The first initiative for client participation that I proposed to Lighthouse was to conduct focus groups with their clients (please refer to Figure 2: Timeline for Initiative 1). On April 26\(^{th}\), 2013, I met the Director of Social Services for Lighthouse, Sunshine County at Haven House. We met to discuss the Chair of the Advisory Board’s assignment to the Program Committee to draft a social services delivery plan by the next Advisory Board meeting on June 13, 2013. Part of this assignment included an “*assessment of the emergency shelter now…what is working and what isn’t working*” (Director of Social Services, personal communication, 2013). When I asked the Director of Social Services what information she would use to compile the assessment, she said she would rely on (1) interns to
compile a report based on client intake sheets\textsuperscript{21}, and (2) her, the Shelter Manager, and the Lead Case managers’ knowledge and experience working in the shelter. A second component of the social service delivery plan was to provide a focused program strategy for the new shelter, which included identifying target populations. At that time, the Director of Social Services told me the new shelter would serve “homeless men, over the age of 18, referred to [Lighthouse] by a collaborative partner and that [Lighthouse] clients from other programs would get first priority” (fieldnotes, April 26, 2013).

Based on our conversation, this seemed like an important opportunity to capture client feedback given that a social services delivery plan was requested that included an assessment of “what is working and what isn’t working” and a target population had been defined. Because I had only collected data on homeless women’s service use, I suggested that I collect data on male homeless clients’ perspective of what works and what doesn’t work about Lighthouse’s current emergency shelter services at Haven House. Doing so would capture their target population’s experiences to inform the construction of the social services delivery plan. The Director of Social Services was very receptive to this but was concerned that I would not have time to collect client feedback in time for the next Advisory Board meeting. Due to time constraints, we decided that focus groups, conducted over the span of two weeks, would capture more clients more efficiently than individual interviews.

\textsuperscript{21} These are forms given to clients upon entry into the shelter. Clients are asked basic demographic information, reasons contributing to homelessness, and resources or services they require. Clients fill out these forms with the help of a case manager or intern.
The Director of Social Services and I met with the Shelter Manager’s office to present the idea and begin scheduling dates for the focus groups. The Shelter Manager thought “it was an excellent idea, as he used to hire researchers to conduct focus groups at his previous job” (fieldnotes, April 26, 2013). He printed out the shelter schedule for me and told me that I could “pick any day that works for you as long as it’s open.” He followed up with “please let me know anyway I can help get the word out to our men” (Shelter Manager, personal communication, 2013).

I scheduled two focus groups, May 9th and May 14th at 6:30 PM, in Haven House’s Men’s Lounge (see Figure 2: Haven House floor plan in Chapter One: Introduction) and asked the shelter manager to post flyers in the shelter as advertisement (please see Appendix F). He also laid out a flyer on every guest bed the night before each focus group. I also arrived early on the day of each focus group to make an announcement during dinner service. In total, 28 unduplicated men participated in the focus groups, each lasting approximately an hour. I asked the Director of Social Services and Shelter Manager to submit topics of interest to me prior to the start of the focus groups. However, since none were submitted I included topics of my choosing.
including: general likes and dislikes about emergency shelter, the benefits that men experience using emergency shelter, the barriers that men face when attempting to obtain shelter, suggested improvements to Haven House services, and suggested improvements to Haven House facilities.

Focus group data revealed that men found the following issues most salient: length of shelter stay, service fragmentation, failure of Haven House to provide adequate resources and information to guests, cycling in and out of emergency shelter, desire to contribute to shelter operations, and the population served. Most men agreed that a 14-day shelter stay, as provided by Haven House, was not enough time to “bring a person from nothing to something.” Men also discussed that although services were available in Sunshine County, they did not come together to provide a cohesive safety net. They recognized that Haven House did an excellent job providing for their basic needs like food and a safe place to stay, but that they are falling short in providing information necessary to address other issues. Because of the short length of stay and lack of information to address other issues, men find themselves cycling in and out of emergency shelter. The second focus group expressed a strong desire to contribute to Haven House operations to improve the services being provided and increase their own self-esteem and self worth. While the first focus group felt strongly that the new Lighthouse shelter should serve exclusively men due to high need and lack of services for this population, the second group felt the shelter should be more inclusive stating “that’s what the [Lighthouse] model is—others. Everyone should have a chance to get some help.”

On May 29th, about two weeks after the last focus group, I submitted a draft report to the Shelter Manager and Director of Social Services requesting feedback via email. After receiving no response, I emailed a final report to the Director of Social Services and the Shelter Manager on June 9th. I also sent a summary of the findings, in the hope that these would be shared with
the Advisory Board on June 13 (see Initiative 2). On June 10th, the Director of Social Services
sent the following email response regarding the final report and summary:

“I read the summary and it sounds fine. I am not sure the whole board will need
it, but I would have some available. We probably need to incorporate it into our
concept proposal [for the new shelter] and give it to the board when they approve
the proposal in Sept, though.

Thank you so much for doing this! A lot of it is already being addressed and will
help us advocate for staffing needs [in our concept proposal].”

After receiving this email, I called the Director of Social Services, who informed me that the
presentation of their social services delivery plan, in the form of the concept proposal, had been
pushed back to the September Advisory Board meeting. However, she suggested making some
copies of the summary of the focus group data, entitled Storing the Homeless, available for
advisory board members to review during the June 13th meeting if they were interested.

On June 21st I returned to Haven House to meet with the Director of Social Services to
follow up after the Advisory Board meeting. While there, I asked the Shelter Manager his
thoughts on the report. The following exchange was taken directly from my fieldnotes:

Shelter Manager: I shared the full report during our staff meeting.

Me: What parts did you share?

Shelter Manager: All of it.

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22 The information collected from the focus groups never made it into the Concept Proposal for the new shelter,
submitted to the Advisory Board in September 2013. I was not included in drafting the proposal and did not collect
data on why this information was not included. However, an educated guess is that it did not occur to the Director
of Social Services to use any client data (either collected by me or Haven House) in the proposal while she was
writing it. Whether she simply forgot or considers this information more anecdotal than official is unclear.

23 Besides the Shelter Manager and the Social Services Division (which is made up of the Director of Social
Services, the Lead Case Manager, and student interns), there are other staff members that carry out daily operations
at the shelter including maintenance, security, intake, and food preparation and distribution. The Shelter Manager
meets with these individuals once a week.
Me: What did they think?

Shelter Manager: They were a little hurt by all of the negative feedback but I told them to keep in mind that it is just a snapshot and that this is an opportunity to get better at what we do.

He also mentioned that he found the results useful but not very surprising and that they had made some changes to their operations as a result. When I asked for examples he told me that they had hung folders with information regarding resources for homeless men and that they were going to make sure these folders were constantly replenished. He also discussed a “resources orientation” occurring every Monday night where a case manager shares helpful resources with the guests that chose to attend and opens the floor to guests so that they could share useful resources with each other.

It is clear that Haven House staff was extremely open to receiving feedback from their clients. Both the Director of Social Services and the Shelter Manager were receptive to the initiative that I proposed. The Shelter Manager was especially encouraging, lending his time and support to the process. Not only did he allow me to schedule focus groups on days that were most convenient to me, he even took it upon himself to ensure that his guests were aware of this opportunity by placing an informational flier on every bed. Although neither the Director of Social Services nor the Shelter Manager contributed to the content of the focus groups or gave feedback on the draft, it is clear that the Shelter Manager read the entire report and found it useful enough to make the focus of a staff meeting. Shelter staff members took client feedback seriously and implemented several changes in order to provide better services to their guests.

**Bi-Monthly Client Focus Groups and Homeless Representative on Program Committee.** Although I consider *Bi-Monthly Client Focus Groups* and *Homeless*
Representative on Program Committee two distinct initiatives, they are worth discussing together for two reasons. The first is that they were conceived, developed, and proposed at the same time. The second is that comparing these initiatives elucidates strategies for adopting initiatives for participation within organizations. Figure 3 shows a timeline for these initiatives, described in more detail in the text below.

![Figure 12: Timeline for Initiatives 6 & 7 (focus groups and client representative on Program Committee)](image)

On March 6th, 2014, I gave a presentation to the Program Committee. In this presentation, I discussed the organizational benefits of including client participation in decision-making before presenting the Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter model (refer to Chapter Five: the Involved), which appears as Initiative 3 in Table 1. After the presentation, the Director of Social Services informed me that the Shelter Manager was developing strategies to involve clients in shelter operations, including a way to hear and address guest grievances. She encouraged me to “get a summary together that shows all of the ways that [Lighthouse] could benefit” (Director of
Social Services, personal communication, 2014) from these efforts. Doing so might support more representation of the homeless in the organization, especially on the Program Committee. Encouraged by this response, I began working on summarizing the literature on client participation in organizational decision-making for the Advisory Board (Initiative 4 in Table 1) and set up a meeting with the Director of Social Services, the Shelter Manager, and the Lead Case Manager of Haven House to develop initiatives for participation involving Haven House guests.

On May 5, 2014, I visited Haven House to meet with the Director of Social Services, Shelter Manager, and Lead Case Manager. During this meeting we developed two initiatives. The first was to establish an advisory board or focus group\(^{24}\) of shelter guests to meet bi-monthly to discuss topics based on decisions being made regarding Haven House service provision. For example, the Shelter Manager put together a comprehensive report for the Program Committee containing four different options for interim housing for shelter guests while the current shelter was being demolished and rebuilt. A focus group of shelter guests could recommend which option is the most feasible for the homeless to access prior to a final vote by the Program Committee. These meetings would be held at Haven House for any interested shelter guest to attend. A facilitator or co-facilitators would present a topic for discussion, take copious notes, and relay this information to Haven House staff, Program Committee, and/or Advisory Board for use in decision-making. Because information would be packaged and relayed by a third party, this initiative is a form of indirect client representation. By design, this initiative gives the Program Committee control over selecting the facilitator and the topics discussed during each

\(^{24}\) I chose to address this initiative as a “focus group” instead of an “advisory board” when presenting it to the Program Committee. I thought calling this initiative a focus group would give the Program Committee more perceived control over decision-making.
focus group and, ultimately, what information would be acted on or shared with the Advisory Board.

The second initiative was to have a homeless representative serve on the Program Committee. According to the Director of Social Services, a homeless representative should have already been serving on the Advisory Board. The following is an expert from the May 5th meeting:

Lead Case Manager (LCM): (Addressing the Director of Social Services) Okay, are you sure having a direct representative on our board is part of the standards that we are supposed to be having, right?

Director of Social Services (DSS): There is supposed to be a homeless person on the advisory board.

Me: Really?!

DSS: Or a formerly homeless.

Me: Where does that say that?!

DSS: I just read it.

LCM: In the standards…in the [Lighthouse] standards book that I have.

DSS: It is in the packet they give to the board too.

Me: Is that a private organizational document or can I see that?

DSS: I think you can see it.

LCM: (Handing the standards to me) It is a lot of pages (laughing).

Shelter Manager (SM): Yeah, it is a lot of pages.

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25 This meeting was audio recorded and then transcribed. The excerpt is a direct quote of what transpired.
Me: I mean, that can be a way to sell this idea [to the Program Committee]. Like
‘hey, this is kind of supposed to be happening anyway so let’s action it.’

The “standards book” referenced in this excerpt is Lighthouse’s National Social Services Standards, which outlines practices and procedures for governing bodies of Lighthouse branches across the country. The standards suggest that “the ethnic makeup of the advisory organization is representative of the communities served by the program” and that the organization “demonstrate board diversity” as best practices. Additionally, “evidence of consumer representation on the program committee” is considered a “regular standard” that should be met (internal document, 2014).

This initiative, as it was conceived in the meeting, would require Lighthouse staff, with input from the Program Committee, to screen for and identify a homeless or previously homeless individual; train this individual in Lighthouse organizational structure, mission, and procedures; and invite them to participate as any other member on the Program Committee. Because this initiative proposed direct involvement of a homeless or formally homeless individual in decision-making, it would be an example of direct client representation. This initiative required the Program Committee to surrender some control over decision-making (essentially one vote out of ten) but was designed to allow them to nominate and select the representative and decide how that representative would be trained. Please refer to Appendix G for a more complete description of both of these initiatives.

Less than a week after our meeting, I sent a draft of proposal of both initiatives to the involved parties for feedback. Over the next month, the Shelter Manager, seeking outside council from a Lighthouse spiritual advisor, helped me develop a “spiritual emphasis” to the proposal so that it was more representative of Lighthouse mission and goals. On November 5th,
during our first Program Committee meeting for the year, I introduced the proposal as a collaborative effort and distributed it to the Program Committee. I asked that they review the proposal so that they could be ready to vote on it during the next meeting.

During the next Program Committee meeting, on January 15, 2015, I presented the two initiatives in more detail to the six committee members in attendance. The response from the committee was mixed. The most resistant to both initiatives was Dan, a Program Committee member who sat on the Advisory Board the longest of the group and seemed to have the most sway in decision-making. The Shelter Manager confirmed this at the May 5th meeting when he revealed he had asked Wendy, another Program Committee and Board member who was very vocal at board and committee meetings and supportive of my work, who the “players” in decision-making at the organizational level are:

*Shelter Manager* (SM): I think my focus of this meeting is to determine who are the players and figure out how we can go ahead and influence those players. If it is going to be anybody at those [Program Committee] meetings that we have been hosting here (Haven House), I think that is who we need to influence. I have been working with Wendy and she has been very helpful in kind of guiding me through who the players are and she was suggesting Dan and Donald26….I have reached out to both of those gentleman and neither one have contacted me, which is fine, and that is why it was okay for the [Program Committee Chair] to be kind of the advocate for us on where we want to go. But if she is going to be the advocate, then we really need to kind of reduce that learning curve and kind of really let her

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26 Donald serves on the Advisory Board but is not on the Program Committee. He is actually the Chair of the Nominations Committee, which works to recruit and vet new Advisory Board members.
know what we want so that she can fight for it and make sure that the [County Coordinator] or whoever…that they really hear those and kind of weigh those.

Me: Yeah, I think that they are more established in the board and I think that Program Committee Chair technically is in the position, like she has the title where she would be the advocate, but I think that because she feels like she is still new to the board she is not as…I don’t know if brazen is the right word but, you know…

Director of Social Services (DSS): She doesn’t have the clout.

In this conversation, we discussed how a board and committee member identified Dan, another board member, as wielding significant power over decision-making. Also, even though he serves on the Program Committee and the Program Committee Chair, in title, has a more powerful role in decision-making, she doesn’t carry the same “clout.”

Dan’s “clout” was apparent when I presented both initiatives to the Program Committee. For the bi-monthly focus group, he was concerned about the quality of information that the Program Committee would receive. He assumed that clients would only want to issue complaints about the organization and stated that it was not the Program Committee’s job to hear individualized gripes—“this is a generation where its all about me. The information should be filtered before it reaches the Program Committee.” The Chair of the Program Committee thought that this was a valid point, referencing her time as a high school principal fielding parents’ concerns.

This concern reveals committee members’ unfamiliarity and preconceived notions about the population they serve. Based on my previous work with the homeless, it is actually quite difficult to elicit complaints from service users who are concerned that any negative feedback
would be confused with ingratitude. During both focus groups with Haven House guests, participants had to be assured that any feedback they provided was both wanted and needed by Lighthouse. Overall, their assessments of the services they received at the shelter were favorable. In fact, data compiled from anonymous comment cards completed by guests revealed that in the same month that Dan anticipated fielding too many complaints from clients, clients rated the quality of services provided by Haven House at a 3.94/4 (please refer to Appendix H for more client comment card data). Interviews with homeless women also revealed that most individuals had positive experiences at Haven House when they were still accepting women. Nevertheless, Dan was assured by the Shelter Manager, who was present at the Program Committee meeting, that the facilitator’s role would be to “filter out feedback that will not be helpful to the committee and generate a summary that is representative of clients ideas and beneficial to [Lighthouse].”

When I presented the details of the initiative that called for a homeless representative on the Program Committee, Dan was, again, the most concerned member in the room and stated his clear objection to this idea:

Dan: The committee is made up of board members. I don’t want someone who isn’t on the board here [at these meetings] telling us what to do.

Director of Social Services (DSS): I am not a board member.

Dan: You know what I mean.

DSS: Jessica isn’t a board member.

Dan: Yeah, but she’s staff.
DSS: Actually she was staff but now she is a community member, committees are supposed to be a mixture of board and community members. In fact, there should be a client representative on our board.

Wendy: On our board?!?

DSS: I think so.

In this moment, I addressed Dan and explained that Lighthouse’s National Social Services Standards dictate that there should be consumer representation on the Program Committee and this initiative is one way that Lighthouse could get closer to those standards. His response—“I can tell you that no Lighthouse across the country is doing that.”

Wendy, addressing the group, suggested that the committee approve the focus groups as a “pilot test.” Assuming that they prove beneficial, she also suggested that the board revisit the second initiative at a later date. The Program Committee agreed on this strategy. I am calling this a “token” compromise because, in the end, an indirect form of client representation was favored over a direct form of representation. Board members on the Program Committee were comfortable approving an initiative that gave them control over the agenda, facilitator, and what information from homeless clients would be presented, giving the homeless absolutely no power and very little participation in this process. They tabled an initiative that called for direct interaction with a client, unfiltered feedback from a client, and giving the homeless an actual seat at the planning table.

Conclusion

As discussed at the outset of this chapter, my initial plan was to encourage change through two channels of influence. The first was to affect how decisions about Lighthouse programming were made at the Program Committee level, which would then affect the decisions
that were made at the Advisory Board level. The second channel of influence that I attempted to
develop was a direct line to the Advisory Board. Unfortunately, my efforts did not go as
planned. However, I was able encourage some changes during my time at Lighthouse.

One notable change already discussed occurred at Haven House where, as a result of
men’s feedback from the focus groups, shelter staff improved and diversified their methods for
providing their guests with needed resources. During my time as a Program Committee member,
I was also able to influence how planning occurred at the committee level. Committees are
formed based on interest or expertise in a specific area such as finance or marketing, rather than
on interest in a particular project. This has several negative consequences for the planning
process. The first is that committee members have to divide the limited time they spend together
discussing multiple projects. In addition, one committee’s planning is stalled while waiting for
another committee to make decisions. For instance, the following excerpt was taken directly
from my field notes after attending my first Program Committee meeting on January 9th, 2014:

Overall, I felt frustrated by the meeting…I feel like there was a lot of talking
around the issues instead of actually diving into them. We talked about the new
shelter and where we are with that but, ultimately, that conversation ended
because Divisional Headquarters would like us to invest in a capital campaign for
funding which would be the domain of the Finance Committee. So, we are stalled
until the Finance Committee comes up with a funding plan. We talked about
[newly acquired property] and the possibility of moving [Lighthouse’s transitional
housing programming] there and selling [the current transitional housing
property], but that is a conversation that really can’t be had without the Property
Committee. It seemed like we continued to run into the issue where we had to
stop conversations when entering into another committee’s territory. We could only speculate on what we might like to happen but not reach any final decisions.

When I discussed these frustrations with the Director of Social Services and asked her how any decisions get made she replied “that’s how it’s always been done.” She also shared that she was not included when the architectural plans were first drafted for the new shelter. The Property Committee exclusively handled this and, as a result, some of the design features were incompatible with the services they wanted to provide at the shelter. Based on the Director of Social Services’ feedback, I discussed the possibility of scheduling joint committee meetings centered around specific projects with the Chair of the Program Committee. Excited by the idea, she set up a meeting with the County Coordinator later that month to get approval and we had Lighthouse’s first joint committee meeting on March 6th, 2014 between the Program and Property Committees.

Figure 4 provides an updated conceptual map of the channels of influence that developed. The dark arrows signify my channels of influence while the lighter arrows and lines show organizational channels. This conceptual map maintains the proposed channels of influence described above but includes the addition of a channel from the change agent to the Homeless Services Division led by the Director of Social Services, Shelter Manager and Lead Case Manager. My interaction with staff lead to the changes implemented at the current emergency shelter, described above. The second channel of influence is from the Program Committee to the Property Committee, marking the adoption of joint committee meetings, also described above.
Implementing Initiatives for Client Participation. In *Chapter Four: The City*, I identified several factors that contributed to a successful collaboration between Lighthouse and the city of San Marina including the right context which created an opportunity for mutual dependence, shared goals, and shared power. However, as described in this chapter, my efforts to encourage Lighthouse to collaborate with clients while planning their new shelter were mostly unsuccessful. The legal ability, provided by the ordinance, and desire to expand services for the homeless created an opportunity for Lighthouse to incorporate more client participation in decision-making. It can also be argued that both Lighthouse and their clients have a shared goal to improve homeless services. Despite the opportune context for collaboration and shared goals,
there was no mutual dependence or shared power between Lighthouse and their clients, as highlighted in Table 2.

As stated in Chapters Two and Four, stakeholder groups with urgency and legitimacy but lacking power, are dependent on the advocacy of others (Mitchel, Agle & Wood, 1997). Clients are dependent on Lighthouse to provide much needed services, however, Lighthouse is not dependent on clients to build and operate their new shelter. Because clients are so dependent on the services Lighthouse provides, they will continue to use them, whether or not the services are tailored to their needs. This is one reason why the homeless continue to be disempowered in this context. My attempts to inform Lighthouse of the multiple organizational benefits obtained through client participation were appreciated by some members of the Program Committee, blocked from the Advisory Board, and ultimately not particularly compelling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Contributing to a Successful Collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ The right context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Mutual dependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Shared goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Shared power</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lighthouse was open to adopting initiatives for client participation only when they were certain of the usefulness of client feedback, had complete control over how it was used, and could devote little to no resources to obtaining it. However, adopted strategies used indirect client representation and could barely be considered collaborative. Powerful “players” within the organization blocked more collaborative strategies calling for direct client representation. The also blocked my attempts to introduce an outsider, whether it was me, the researcher, or their clients, to the planning or me table (Initiatives 4, 5 and 7). The County Coordinator denied my direct access to the Advisory Board and one of the longest standing Advisory Board
members vehemently opposed working alongside a client on the Program Committee. These experiences reveal that the right context and shared goals cannot overcome the larger hurdles of creating mutual dependence and sharing power.

Due to Lighthouse’s hesitance to accept initiatives that called for participation of outsiders, a more useful strategy may have been to try to create a coalition for change at the onset of this project. That is, instead of serving as an individual change agent, a more effective approach might have been to build consensus for client participation by enlisting a few key “players” within the organization to join this cause. Building a coalition of allies within the Lighthouse organization to promote direct participation of the homeless in the shelter planning process would be an example of what urban planner, Robert Mayer (1972) describes as a structural approach to fostering social change, in contrast to promoting change in an organization or community through the isolated efforts of an individual change agent. In Chapter’s Two and Four, I discuss how stakeholder groups lacking power can gain representation when more powerful actors advocate on their behalf (Mitchell et al., 1997). Despite being perceived as having more power and legitimacy to participate in planning than homeless clients, I still carried less clout and legitimacy than decision-makers within the organization. A small coalition for change comprised of Lighthouse members and myself might have increased “buy in” for the client participation initiatives that I proposed. The collective and public support of even a few other members of the organization might have also increased my perceived legitimacy and actual power to influence the planning process.

The fact that individuals within the organization seemed unwilling to share some power with the clients they serve is not unique or even surprising. LeRoux (2009) refers to similar practices as paternalism or the “historical tradition for nonprofits to be governed predominantly
by white civic and economic elites who engage in decision making on behalf of service
recipients without giving them a voice in program planning or determining how service are to be
delivered” (p. 507). Her research reveals that nonprofits are less likely to have clients serve on
advisory boards when they rely on charitable contributions (vs. government funding) and have
governing boards that are not racially representative of their clients27. Nonprofits are also less
likely to have clients serve on work groups, which are usually short term and for specific
projects, when they have a male executive director and they are a large organization. Lighthouse
meets all of these criteria. What is surprising, however, is that this organization uses language
such as “stand for and serve the marginalized” and “services that reach out in relationship,
rescue, and recovery to restore broken lives” to define their mission and purpose but continue to
marginalize the clients they serve, albeit unintentionally, by constraining them to remain
uninvolved in the decisions that affect them.

Lighthouse staff, Haven House staff members in particular, were more supportive of
collaborating with the affected. The Director of Social Services supported every initiative for
client participation that I proposed and even helped me navigate the organization to identify the
right target audience for each initiative. It was because she approached me after my presentation
of the *Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter* model (Initiative 3) that Haven House staff and
I met to develop Initiatives 6 and 7. She was slow and often unresponsive to requests for
feedback on these initiatives. However, I believe this to be more indicative of her demanding
schedule than of her openness to these efforts.

The Shelter Manager was the most supportive of initiatives for client participation, in
general, and had already been developing his own strategies, which informed Initiatives 6 and 7.

27 This is due, in part, to stipulations usually attached to government funding. Avoiding regulations on their
activities is one reason why Lighthouse, Sunshine County favors private donations.
He also provided timely and enthusiastic responses to all of my requests for support and assistance, sometimes going beyond my requests to ensure the success of initiatives, as was described in *Focus Groups: Male Clients*. He was also the only person in the organization to implement changes to program operations that were more representative of clients’ expressed needs. In many ways he operates as a change agent from within the organization.

Even though Haven House staff members were open to adopting initiatives for client participation, Lighthouse administrators and long-standing board members, who ultimately have the most decision-making power in the organization, were not. As summarized in Table 3, I conclude from this work that homeless individuals can receive a seat at the planning table when decision-makers are less removed from the clients they serve and the daily operations of the organization. For instance, collaboration may be more successful in a smaller, less established organization that isn’t so deeply rooted in doing things the way they’ve always done them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Factors</th>
<th>Initiative Factors</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providers as decision-makers</td>
<td>Indirect client representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller organization</td>
<td>Organization maintains control over decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less hierarchical decision-making structure</td>
<td>Understood organizational benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less established</td>
<td>Few to no organizational resources needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision makers removed from clients served</td>
<td>Direct client representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger organization</td>
<td>Organizations perceived lack of control over decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical decision-making structure</td>
<td>Benefits not understood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-standing organizational practices</td>
<td>Organizational resources needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Factors that Hinder and Facilitate Initiatives for Client Participation
Advisory Board members are nominated and recruited by other board members and are typically members of the community who have been successful in business or other ventures outside of social service provision. Lighthouse administrators work out of offices in Sunshine Ranch and rely on the Director of Social Services to directly oversee Haven House operations. As such, both of these powerful stakeholder groups are far removed from social service provision and the homeless clients they make decisions on behalf of. This disconnection provides ample opportunity for preconceived notions and misinformation to enter into decision-making, as was the case in the Bi-Monthly Client Focus Groups initiative described above. Haven House staff, on the other hand, has a keen understanding of the needs, strengths, and weaknesses of their homeless clients, because they interact with them daily. Individuals working closely with homeless clients were the easiest to convince of the merits of client participation but had the least control over the new shelter planning process.

Despite resistance and repeated failures, I am not giving up hope on Lighthouse or similar organizations. Although I was able to identify the lack of mutual dependence between Lighthouse and their clients and Lighthouse’s hesitance to share power as hurdles to more collaborative planning and decision-making, it is unclear what is at the root of this hesitance. Whether its fear or misinformation, I believe that the key to success in organizations like Lighthouse is convincing powerful stakeholders that their clients are stewards of valuable knowledge worth sharing.
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

The central argument driving this work is that designing services for the homeless is good, but designing services with the homeless is better because it decreases barriers to service use and more effectively addresses the needs of this community. In Chapter Two, I discussed the literature on barriers that the homeless face when accessing needed services, in general. In Chapter Three, I presented my own data from interviews with homeless women, which revealed the multi-level barriers they encounter when accessing shelter in Sunshine County. In Chapter Two, I also reviewed the literature on the many benefits to organizations and individuals when the affected are involved in decision-making.

As a researcher, I examined the planning process for Lighthouse’s new emergency shelter in the face of changing socio-political priorities. As a change agent, I attempted to encourage collaboration between those involved in this planning process and those affected by the decisions being made. The underlying goals of these efforts were to (1) decrease the barriers that homeless individuals may encounter when using Lighthouse’s new emergency shelter; (2) improve the quality of shelter services available to Sunshine County’s drastically underserved homeless community; and (3) understand how to encourage more just and collaborative social service planning efforts in other times and places. Unfortunately, the extent to which I was able to encourage a more collaborative planning process within the organization was minimal. As such, it would be optimistic to conclude that my efforts had any impact on decreasing barriers to shelter use or improving the quality of shelter services available. However, this work has identified several factors that may facilitate or constrain collaborative planning processes at the organizational level and local policy level.

Summary of Findings
In *Chapter Four: The City*, I described the socio-political context that led to the creation of Ordinance No NS 2848, which entitled Lighthouse to demolish and rebuild their emergency shelter. I also analyzed an unlikely collaboration between San Marina planners and Lighthouse. Despite a turbulent past, these two entities were able to come together to contribute to the language of the ordinance. I suggest that four important factors explain this success: the right context, mutual dependence, shared goals, and shared power.

The right sociopolitical context created the opportunity for mutual dependence. Lighthouse and the city government shared the same goal for the partnership—establishing the ordinance. In the past, the city possessed all the power. They used this power to prevent Lighthouse from improving and expanding their shelter. However, shifts in the socio-political climate put pressure on the city to reprioritize homeless service provision. Lighthouse, an expert service provider, was able to gain some power in this context only when the city became dependent on them to invest their own resources into providing homeless services. This dynamic meant that each partner required the other to accomplish their shared goal, resulting in shared power between Lighthouse and the city. It wasn’t until Lighthouse procured some power that they were finally able to gain city approval to expand Haven House.

In *Chapter Six: The Involved*, I used the conclusions about factors that contribute to successful collaborations in *Chapter Four: The City* to analyze my mostly unsuccessful efforts to encourage a more collaborative shelter planning process at Lighthouse. There are several reasons why the right context for collaboration between Lighthouse and their clients exists. First, as described in *Chapter Four*, Ordinance No NS 2848 legally entitles Lighthouse to move forward with this process. In addition, several findings from *Chapter Five: The Affected* highlight the usefulness of collaboration between Lighthouse and their clients.
The *Stakeholder Ideals for Emergency Shelter* model revealed that Lighthouse’s emergency shelter priorities diverge more from service users’ priorities than service users’ priorities diverge from each other and Lighthouse’s. In other words, male and female service users share more ideals with the organization and each other than the organization shares with either service user group, suggesting that Lighthouse’s new shelter plans are not as reflective of their service users’ priorities as they could be. The model also shows that the two groups most misaligned in terms of priorities are Lighthouse and their current and future clients, homeless men. However, I also note that while most priorities are not shared, they rarely conflict. This suggests that if these two groups were able to collaborate, they might easily reach a consensus on many of aspects of the new shelter.

Despite the right context and the arguably shared goal of improving homeless services, efforts to encourage collaboration between Lighthouse and their clients were mostly unsuccessful. I believe this is due, at least in part, to a lack of mutual dependence and shared power. Because clients are so underserved, they are dependent on Lighthouse to provide much needed services, so much so that clients will use whatever services Lighthouse provides, whether tailored to their needs or not. Lighthouse, on the other hand, is not dependent on clients to build and operate their new shelter. This dynamic creates an imbalance of power between Lighthouse and their clients. Ultimately, Lighthouse did not see the value in inviting the homeless to the planning table. However, had I approached this project by establishing a small coalition for change and then, as part of a coalition, encouraged the organization to implement client participation strategies, Lighthouse may have been more likely to recognize the benefits of adopting more inclusive planning practices for both the organization and its homeless clients.
My experiences attempting to encourage Lighthouse to be more collaborative did reveal several organizational factors that facilitate and constrain implementation of initiatives for client participation. I believe initiatives, including those that entail direct client representation, can be successful when decision-makers are less removed from the clients they serve and the daily operations of the organization. Initiatives for client participation are constrained in organizations that are large, have a hierarchical decision-making structure, have long-standing organizational practices, and do not have decision-makers directly serving clients. In these organizations, initiatives that rely on indirect client representation may be implemented if the organization uses few to none of their own resources, can maintain control over decisions, and understands the benefits of receiving client feedback.

It is well established that the poor lack power and are often excluded from policy and other decision-making processes (see Chapter Two). However, involving the affected in poverty alleviation efforts continues to be a challenge, as my work has clearly shown. In Chapter Four, I propose that instead of trying to attain buy-in from policy-makers at the top, a better starting point is to work with service providers to encourage them to use more collaborative practices in their own organizations. Because service providers are more likely to be involved in community-level policy and decision-making, this may be the first step that will lead to farther-reaching efforts to include the homeless in poverty alleviation efforts. However, as I mentioned in Chapter Six, getting buy-in from service providers comes with its own challenges. A significant one is that service-providing organizations are not made up solely of service providers. At Lighthouse, there is a hierarchical organizational structure that places the actual providers of homeless services underneath board members and administrators. As a result, the individuals in the organization most likely to advocate on behalf of the homeless, believe in the
importance of including them as stakeholders in decision-making, and collaborate with them are themselves limited in the power they have over organizational decisions.

**Limitations**

One obvious and unique limitation of this work is the inherent subjectivity of the research approach. Due to my role as both a change agent and a participant observer, the knowledge generated by this work was colored by my vantage point. Although my role as a previous employee of the organization, change agent, and committee member resulted in my specific perspective and analysis of the planning process, there were several benefits of being actively involved in the process I was studying (refer to the discussion of my role as a change agent in *Chapter Three*). Another individual in the same context may have had a different interpretation of events. Through careful documentation of my research process, I was able to differentiate between events that occurred due to my influence from those that probably would have occurred had I not been present.

Another limitation noted in *Chapter Four: The City* was that the city planner assigned to the ordinance did not respond to several requests to be interviewed. As such, I could only speculate about the city’s motivations during the process of creating the ordinance. Also, the interview data in *Chapter Six: The Involved were limited in important respects*. The data collected only captured the planning process at the organizational level. Individual organizational members’ feelings, thoughts, and motivations fell outside of the scope of this study. More in-depth interviews with key members of the organization including the County Coordinator, Dan, the senior board member, and the Chair of the Program Committee would have contributed to a broader understanding of the decision-making process within the organization. However, due to my dwindling access, I did not believe that a formal interview
process was feasible for this study. In addition, I assumed that formal interviews might compromise my “insider” status by increasing the salience of my role as a researcher instead of a committee member.

The present study captured, in-depth, how the shelter planning process developed over time. However, it was, ultimately, a look at one planning process occurring in one organization in one city. As a result, caution is needed to avoid overgeneralizing the results obtained from these efforts. However, this study does provide an empirical basis for generating new questions and future work in an area where more research is critically needed.

**Future Research**

I intend to extend this study in future research. In order to increase the generalizability of these results, one important avenue to pursue is to identify organizations containing the suggested factors that facilitate collaboration—organizations where decision-makers are less removed from service provision, there is a less hierarchical decision-making structure, and less established procedures—and work with them to try to implement initiatives for participation. I would also like to identify organizations similar to Lighthouse that may be more resistant to these initiatives and explore: (1) what exactly is behind the hesitation and (2) whether new strategies can be developed to assuage hesitation, increase perceived organizational dependence on client participation, and encourage organizations to surrender some of their power over organizational decision making to their clients. These efforts could help determine whether the factors that encourage successful collaborations and facilitate and constrain the adoption of initiatives for client participation apply to other contexts and organizations. Future work in this area would consider whether adjustments and/or additions should be made to these models.
In addition to applying these efforts to other contexts, future research could include the individual level of analysis that this work is missing. Capturing organizational members’ beliefs, thoughts, and motivations can highlight other factors contributing to the successful implementation of initiatives for client participation. For instance, perhaps personality, life experiences, or leadership style affects an administrator’s willingness to facilitate direct client participation in the planning process. Including a multi-level analysis in keeping with the social ecological approach would create a more robust understanding of how to successfully implement initiatives for client participation.

Lessons Learned

As discussed above, not all the goals that I set out to accomplish were attained. However, this work does make several important contributions to the literature. First, I highlight several factors that contributed to a successful government-nonprofit collaborative partnership. In addition, I suggest that these factors also can be applied to analyzing the success of collaborative partnerships between nonprofits and their clients. I also suggest that a lack of mutual dependence and shared power, in particular, are significant hurdles to collaboration between two entities. I conclude that for collaborations to be successful, each entity must believe that working with the other has value to them.

This work also provides insight into the factors that make initiatives for client participation more likely to succeed within an organization. It highlights that characteristics of the organization are just as important as characteristics of the initiative to success. Having an organizational mission that seems to support just and inclusive planning processes does not always indicate that members of the organization are willing to offer clients a seat at the planning table. However, the role that decision-makers play within the organization (board members vs.
service providers) and the complicated and diffuse nature of decision-making within an organization (hierarchical structure) do seem to matter. Further, the type of client representation proposed within an initiative, the amount of organizational resources it requires, and the perceived organizational benefit gained from implementation seem to matter as well. This suggests that initiatives for client participation can be tailored to the organization to increase the likelihood that they will be embraced and successfully implemented.

Having had some time away from this project, I realized that I analyzed the role that organizational and initiative factors played in the implementation of client participation, and concluded that a limitation of this work is that it does not consider the role of individual organizational member. However, I have yet to discuss how the characteristics of the change agent affect change processes. In my journals, I noted several instances where I felt frustrated by my interactions with certain members of the organization. As a young woman relatively new to this field who found herself seated at the same table with older, traditional, successful business men, I often felt push back from senior members of the organization. In one entry I wrote after a Program Committee meeting “[senior board member] continues to be a really dark cloud over my experience and rebuts almost everything I say.” As I already noted, senior board members were perceived by other members to have more “clout” and legitimacy. Although, I had gained the trust of some Lighthouse members due to our past working relationship, a change agent who’s characteristics were more reflective of Lighthouse’s powerful actors—especially working in concert with a coalition of allies from within the organization—may have been perceived as more legitimate and, as a result, more convincing. I conclude, from my experiences navigating power and gender dynamics within this setting, that adopting a coalition for change approach at the outset of the planning process might have mitigated my perceived lack of power and
legitimacy as I worked to foster organizational change from my more limited vantage point as a singular, external (non-member) change agent.

Saegert (1987) asserts that when attempting to produce social change, a researcher should consider themselves a person first and researcher second. My efforts to produce social change have been guided by the assumption that designing services for the homeless is good but designing services with the homeless is better. As a researcher, I know this thesis is supported by the literature. As a previous service provider, I know that having to secure and utilize homeless services converts a service user into an expert capable of informing and improving service design and delivery. As a person, I know that involving individuals in decision-making that affects them is better than supporting their continued marginalization. Despite appeals to evidence, logic, and morality, I have learned that this argument can be difficult to “sell” to administrators of community organizations. It is my hope that this work will serve to illuminate this process for other individuals committed to encouraging positive change and improving the quality of life and services to homeless individuals in their community and beyond.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A: LIST OF DATA SOURCES

1. Lighthouse Board of Director Meeting Minutes:
   a. June 2013
   b. September 2013
   c. November 2013

2. City Documents:
   b. Planning Presentation to Homeless Service Providers-May 23, 2012
   c. Homeless Service Provider Stakeholder Meeting: Agenda & Notes-Jan 16, 2013
   d. Planning Presentation to Homeless Service Providers-Jan 16, 2013
   e. Draft Ordinance-June 2013
   f. Planning Presentation to Community Redevelopment and Housing Commission-June 18, 2013
   g. Request for Planning Commission Action-July 8, 2013
   h. Request for Council Action-August 5, 2013
   i. Planning Presentation to Development and Transportation Council-June 4, 2013
   j. Planning Presentation to Planning Commission-June 24, 2013
   k. Planning Presentation to Industrial Property Owners-June 27, 2013
   m. Planning Presentation in Planning Commission Study Session-July 23, 2013
   n. Letter to Industrial Property Owners-June 18, 2013
   o. Final Ordinance-September 2013
   p. Signed Ordinance-September 13, 2013

3. Field Notes:
   a. Meeting between Planning and Building Agency and Lighthouse-Nov 5, 2013
   b. Meeting with James Hamilton-November 14, 2013
   c. Meeting with Joan Williams-November 19, 2013
   d. Meeting with Joan Williams-April 26, 2013
   e. Phone call with Joan Williams-June 10, 2013
   f. Lighthouse Program Committee Meeting-June 10, 2013
   g. Lighthouse Advisory Board Meeting-June 13, 2013
   h. Meeting with Joan Williams-June 21, 2013
   i. Planning Commission Meeting-June 24, 2013
   j. Industrial Property Owner Meeting-June 27, 2013
   k. Planning Commission Meeting-July 8, 2013
   l. City Council Meeting-August 5, 2013
   m. Meeting with Joan Williams-August 10, 2013
   n. Email Communication with Joan Williams-August 26, 2013
   o. Lighthouse Advisory Board Meeting-September 12, 2013
   p. Lighthouse Advisory Board Meeting-November 14, 2013
   q. Meeting with Joan Williams-November 26, 2013
   r. Lighthouse Advisory Board Meeting-February 13, 2014
   s. Lighthouse Advisory Board Meeting-April 10, 2014
APPENDIX B: SELECTIONS OF LIGHTHOUSE SHELTER EXPANSION CONCEPT PROPOSAL

Procedures & Guidelines Territorial & Divisional Program Councils

Lighthouse

Western Territory

Divisional/Territorial Program Council

PC-2: PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORM

PROGRAM NARRATIVE

A. Purpose and Goals

1. Purpose: To build and operate a Christian-based emergency housing facility that will meet the restorative needs of a wide, flexible scope of single homeless men as the part of the mission of Lighthouse and the objectives of the Sunshine County 2020 Plan to End Homelessness.

Haven House is presently an emergency shelter for 50 homeless men operated in an outdated building in a condition beyond repair. Currently the programming for the shelter is held in a facility built in 1964 to house 36 homeless, transient men offering minimal assistance programming. In 1981 the facility was revised to include 16 beds for homeless women, and in 2001 to add a 2 bed family room and some case management. Due to overcrowding and safety issues, the facility re-focused on one population, homeless men, in 2012. The 34 bed dorm was retained for sheltering emergency guests for 14 days, and the 4 bedrooms for women were converted into a Phase II 30-45 day program for men seeking employment or rapid housing referrals.

The programming for clients has increased and improved beyond the capacity of the building. The outside sewer system is in pieces, the courtyard is crumbling, and the building is not accessible to those with disabilities. Space for all services – dining room, storage, kitchen, staffing, meeting and class rooms, sleeping and intake are inadequate for even the present staff and population. The fixtures, appliances, room plans, and structure, are outdated and in disrepair.

The purpose of this program proposal is to ask approval to erect an attractive, safe, adequate, flexible use building for a new emergency housing facility for homeless men. The structure would be built on the same piece of property and meet all San Marina coding and housing ordinance standards. The SB2 clause of the zoning Ordinance has been approved and put into law to accept a homeless emergency structure on our present location of up to 75 beds, if all the provisions of the ordinance and zoning codes are met.

The facility would be designed to produce a trauma reduced environment with safe, flexible, pleasant surroundings that would enhance Christ-centered, strengths based programming and encourage restoration of the whole person. The facility would be open to any man 18 and over in Sunshine County who is homeless. The rooms in the building would be flexible to house men in different circumstances and programs. There would be spacious, attractive places for gathering, meeting, and relaxing both indoors and out. Larger gathering places would provide room for a variety of learning activities, programs, spiritual renewal, groups and one-one services with staff. The current programs provided at Haven House would be enhanced and expanded. Better
privacy and safety concerns would be met for special needs populations such as human trafficking victims, the physically disabled, veterans, young adults, and those in recovery or re-entry. The Phase II Work Program and Housing Referral Program would be increased in capacity and services. The time limit for clients would be lengthened; assessment, case management and housing outcomes for all clients would be improved.

2. **Goals:**

1. Provide an emergency housing center that has the capacity to provide housing and services for 75 single homeless men
2. Have the flexibility to provide housing and services for different sub-populations of homeless persons on any given night
3. Operate a facility that meets safety and accessibility laws and codes
4. Provide a facility and programming that is restorative to the whole person
5. Provide adequate needs assessment for guests toward next steps in housing
6. Provide flexibility in programs for special needs of homeless men
7. Expand services and improve outcomes for homeless clients served
8. Assist men in finding and maintaining employment
9. Encourage those in addiction toward recovery
10. Collaborate with Lighthouse and community partners for case management and services
11. Design and uphold a friendly neighbor policy for the area.
12. Carry forth the Mission of Lighthouse and the mission statement of Sunshine County Social Services
13. Meet requirements of the SB2 ordinance of the City of San Marina
14. Comply with the goals of the Sunshine County Commission in their plan to end homelessness

**Rationale:** Haven House currently is the only low threshold emergency facility that provides year round shelter and services to homeless men throughout Sunshine County for more than one night. Haven House is also the only faith-based emergency shelter program in Sunshine County. Lighthouse has 60 years of history and experience of offering quality care to homeless men at its present sight in San Marina. The new building would increase our capacity by 50% to the Sunshine County male homeless population. Homeless men are the largest portion of the homeless population, and the most underserved, as demonstrated in the Sunshine County Point in Time count and studies on homeless population demographics. The center would also be able to serve more special needs male sub-populations—ex-offenders re-entering the community, those needing recovery from addiction, returning veterans, the physically handicapped, human trafficking victims, and young adults. A new facility would replace a building constructed in 1964 that has limited, inflexible space, does not provide for the needs of those physically handicapped or sight impaired, is not maximally safe or welcoming, and is in need of major repairs and updates. The center would provide space for a needs assessment & intake area, adequate offices for social workers and staff, computer/classroom space for educational programs, laundry facility for guests, ample gathering areas for men with different needs in different sized room formations that could be used for multiple sub-populations of the homeless, and space for specialized programs.
for those guests wanting to move out of homelessness. Having such a structure would allow Lighthouse to expand both programs and staffing and improve outcomes for clients in achieving employment, housing, and healing. The building would be designed to be an integral partner in the county plan to emphasize short-term emergency housing with multiple services to move persons out of homelessness in a shorter time frame.

C. Target Population

The new emergency housing facility would continue to serve all men needing housing on any given night in Sunshine County. The process of entry and intake would be integrated by a County Coordinated Intake Center. Fifty percent of the Sunshine County homeless population is estimated to be chronically homeless individuals. The new facility would target these persons for a caring respite from the streets, and for restoration, resources, and referrals to assist them to move out of homelessness into permanent supportive housing. The other 50% of the homeless population become homeless temporarily. These persons would be targeted for case management that could help them obtain and sustain permanent housing quickly. Lighthouse Phase II, Work Search and Integrated Employment programs would be continued, adapted and expanded toward assisting this group.

Referrals from other Lighthouse programs would be given first priority. The emergency facility would also continue to provide housing and case management for the sub-populations of those re-entering the community from county jail, other ex-offenders, Veterans, young adults, those wanting recovery from addiction, and those searching for work and housing.

The new facility would also allow us to target other sub-populations of the homeless. Rooms are being designed which will be especially able to house those with physical disabilities, chronic medical needs, or temporary illness. Other rooms are being designed to render more privacy and confidentiality for victims of human trafficking and persons dealing with emotional and mental trauma.

The design of the new facility would allow services at the facility to change over time as the populations and needs of those finding themselves homeless change.

D. Duration of the Program

The duration of the facility would last many decades. The program to serve the needs of the homeless would continue and adapt until there are no more needs or no more homelessness. The facility could live on beyond those needs to provide housing for other populations that are in need and underserved in the future.

The duration of stay for any given time-frame could be increased. Presently persons who are regular guests can stay for 14 consecutive nights. Persons enrolled in our Phase II Housing or Work Search Program can presently stay 30 consecutive days. The Hearth Act that directs and evaluates funding for homeless services in Sunshine County would like persons to exit emergency facilities into permanent affordable or permanent supportive housing within 20 days. This is a goal to be reached gradually as rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing options increase. It would be the goal of the emergency facility program that persons could find the next step to serve their restoration and housing needs within this time frame. It would also be the focus of Lighthouse to restore the whole person and form client-centered, best decisions for each person who comes to our facility.
The Hearth Act also states that transitional housing programs should be no longer than 6 months. This used to be the limit for emergency housing programs. It is conceived that some of the programs housed within the new facility may be technically defined as transitional by these new definitions. The target for the duration of the program is to offer Christ-based restoration out of homelessness for the whole persons in as timely and sustainable manner as possible. Persons with special needs – physical disabilities, mental challenges, emotional trauma, addictions, illness and aging circumstances may realistically need more than 20-30 days to be assessed, assisted, referred, and accepted into more permanent housing that addresses their long term needs.

With the proposed new building, the main goal for the duration of each program could be individualized as assessed by the case management staff to help the client rather than be due to limitations of the facility. The outcome would be that more persons could be assisted to stable housing that would help them not return to homelessness.

H. Facilities -

The existing facility will be demolished and will be replaced with a new building on the same property. The facility will be a 2 story structure and will provide 75 beds for homeless men. The new facility will include the offices, program space, and sleeping accommodations necessary to meet the needs of the homeless men in our community.

As a result of SB-2, the City of San Marina recently wrote and passed an ordinance governing new facilities and programs built to serve the homeless. The ordinance (attached) includes a section written specifically to accommodate our building and program plans. The ordinance supercedes all other prior zoning or permit requirements. We have worked hard to establish a close working relationship with the City of San Marina and our neighbors.
APPENDIX C: DESIGN ITEMS FOR ARCHITECT

Haven House Remodel
Design Items for Architect

The following represent items for consideration by the architect chosen for the Haven House Remodel. These notes will be given to the architect to assist him as he develops his initial design. As the initial design takes shape, we will follow up with the architect regarding further detail and/or changes.

Create a nice entry area with secure and pleasant looking gate (entry to be on Garfield)
Interior should have a comfortable flow with an “open” feel and providing good line of sight
Structure will likely need to be two stories
The facility should accommodate 75 guests
Sleeping rooms should reflect 25 beds, in 2 bed, or somewhat larger but semi-private units
Sleeping rooms should reflect 50 beds in 2–4 dormitory units
Dining Room should accommodate 100 and should be designed for multiple uses including recreation
Chapel with seating for 50, stained glass window – seating should be moveable
Indoor and outdoor recreation space
Computer classroom for 25 persons
2 Lounges, one for short-term clients and one for long-term clients
8 offices, reception desk, 2 intake offices and 4 cubicle working spaces
Nice looking storage locker for each bed
Commercial laundry for 50 clients, additional laundry for 25 clients personal use
Restrooms on both floors, for clients, staff, guests, shower areas private and very durable
Doors should operate with codes or cards to achieve best and most efficient security
Building should include intercom system and indoor/outdoor surveillance
Elevator only if necessary, prefer dumb waiter or similar to move luggage/supplies
APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What are some specific features/aspects you like about emergency shelter?
2. What are some specific features/aspects you dislike about emergency shelter?
3. What benefits do homeless men experience by staying in emergency shelters?
4. What are the barriers that homeless men face when trying to look for or get emergency shelter?
5. Can you tell me about your overall experience using emergency shelter in Sunshine County?
6. Do you have any suggestions for improvement of Haven House facilities or services?
7. What does having emergency shelter mean to you?
APPENDIX E: DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES

1. Meeting with Director of Social Services- April 26, 2013
2. Phone Call with Director of Social Services- June 10, 2013
3. Commission to End Homelessness Meeting- June 12, 2013
4. Advisory Board Meeting- June 13, 2013
5. Informal Interview with Director of Social Services and Director of Shelter Aid (after Planning Commission meeting)- June 24, 2013
6. Informal Interview with Director of Social Services and City Planners (after Industrial Property Holders Meeting)- June 27, 2013
7. Informal Interview with Shelter Manager (after Planning Commission Meeting)- July 8, 2013
8. Meeting with Director of Social Services- August 2, 2013
9. Advisory Board Meeting- September 12, 2013
10. Advisory Board Meeting- November 13, 2013
11. Lunch with Program Committee Chair and Director of Social Services- November 26, 2013
12. Program Committee Meeting- January 9, 2014
13. Meeting with County Coordinator, Program Committee Chair, and Director of Social Services- January 27, 2014
14. Advisory Board Meeting- February 13, 2014
15. Joint Committee Meeting- March 6, 2014
16. Advisory Board Meeting- April 10, 2014
17. Meeting with Shelter Staff- May 5, 2014
18. Meeting with Community Organizer- May 9, 2014
19. Joint Committee Meeting- May 29, 2014
20. Email Correspondence with County Coordinator- April 13-June 6, 2014
22. Advisory Board Meeting- September 11, 2014
23. Meeting with the Director of Social Services- November 4, 2014
24. Program Committee Meeting- November 5, 2014
25. Program Committee Meeting- January 15, 2015
Lighthouse would like to build a bigger, better facility to serve the homeless of Sunshine County. They are in the process of creating a plan for the delivery of services but need your help. Please lend your voice to this process!

Topics for discussion will include:
- Your experiences using emergency shelter
- What you like about emergency shelter
- What you don’t like about emergency shelter
- Suggestions for improvement
- What your ideal emergency shelter would be like

Your feedback in these sessions is voluntary and may help inform how Lighthouse delivers services to the homeless. The quality of care that you receive at Lighthouse will not be impacted by your responses. Your experiences and knowledge matter so please come and join the discussion!

Sessions:
- May 9th at 6:30 PM
- May 14th at 6:30 PM
Come to one or both!
Location: Haven House Lounge

Let your voice be heard!
APPENDIX G: PROPOSAL OF INITIATIVES FOR CLIENT PARTICIPATION

Purpose and Goals

The purpose of this document is to propose two initiatives focused on systematically capturing client feedback. The first initiative, (A) appointing a client (homeless) representative to the Program Committee, will serve to incorporate direct client feedback into organizational decision-making. The second initiative, (B) bi-monthly focus groups with Haven House guests, proposes to transfer information between Lighthouse’s Advisory Board and Program Committee and their clients through the use of a facilitator.

A. Client Representative on the Program Committee

The purpose of this initiative is to accurately capture and represent the needs, issues, and concerns of Lighthouse homeless services users. The goals of this initiative are as follows:

1. Engage in a screening process (discussed in more detail below) to identify a homeless or previously homeless individual that can represent the interests and concerns of the greater homeless community.
2. Train this individual in Lighthouse organizational structure, mission, procedures, and goals.
3. Invite this individual to join the Program Committee and participate in Program Committee meetings and decision-making.

Lighthouse Committees are open to members of the community with a vested interest in the subject matter of the committee, as well as Lighthouse staff and board members. The homeless representative can, therefore, be easily integrated into the existing committee without changes to existing Lighthouse practices/procedures.

B. Bi-monthly Focus Groups with Haven House Guests

The purpose of this initiative is to collect systematic feedback from homeless clients on a variety of useful topics. The goals of this initiative are as follows:

1. Establish bi-monthly focus groups at Haven House that consist of Haven House guests interested in becoming more involved with Lighthouse.
2. Select a facilitator(s) that can transmit information between Lighthouse and shelter guests.
3. Select topics of interest to be discussed at focus groups.
4. Establish a system of reporting feedback from bi-monthly focus groups to Lighthouse.

Haven House guests are often experienced service users, having received assistance from various types of programs operated by a number of organizations. As such, they may be able to provide insights into service design delivery that can be useful to Lighthouse’s staff, committee, and board members.

This initiative proposes to institute regular (bi-monthly), voluntary focus groups at Haven House, for the convenience of the participants. During each focus group, preselected topics/issues will
be discussed. The facilitator(s) will work with Lighthouse and Haven House staff and guests to come up with the most useful topics/issues for discussion at each focus group. Ideally, these meetings will be held the same day of every month (second Tuesday of every other month, third Wednesday of every other month, etc.) during months where Advisory Board meetings are not scheduled. The week of the scheduled focus group, Haven House guests will be informed of the date, time, location, and topic of the meeting upon check in. Flyers should also be posted at Haven House describing this initiative’s importance, purpose and goals, along with a schedule of the topics/issues to be discussed (as this information becomes available).

The facilitator(s) will conduct these focus groups as semi-structured open dialogues, beginning with brief introductions. During introductions the facilitator(s) should share new and exciting news about Lighthouse (programs that are doing well, new services being offered, success stories, etc.). Topics for discussion during focus groups can range broadly from needs assessment, to feedback on specific programs or services, to ideas for service design or implementation, or any other topics that may be of particular value to Lighthouse and/or guests. The content of these meetings should be audio recorded and then transcribed and the facilitator(s) are also encouraged to take notes. At the end of each meeting, guests will be asked for ideas and discussion points for the next focus group. The facilitator(s) must provide a detailed written summary of each focus group at the Advisory Board and/or Program Committee meetings. Oral reports are also encouraged, as well. Written reports should be organized and stored in a binder or an electronic document at Haven House and/or Sunshine Ranch offices to be used as a resource if needed.

Need for Initiatives

The Strategic Plan lists the reconstruction and expansion of Haven House as an organizational priority. As such, many of the decisions made at Advisory Board meetings reflect this priority. Many of the agenda items of the Program Committee revolve around this priority, as well. Currently, the Program Committee consists of board members, community members, and staff. Each of these members brings their own unique experiences, knowledge, and expertise to the table. While the current Program Committee is well equipped to speak to needs and concerns of the homeless from the perspective of service providers, a direct representation of the needs and concerns of service users is missing from organizational decision-making. The proposed initiatives will fill this need.

The National Social Services Standards (2nd Edition) published by Lighthouse, lists the following as a “best practice” for advisory organizations (this includes boards, councils, and committees):

“The ethnic makeup of the advisory organization is representative of the communities served by the program.”

To accomplish this practice the Standards suggest, “the program demonstrate board diversity.” Furthermore, the National Social Services Standards suggest the following as a “regular standard” that should be met:

“There is evidence of consumer representation on the program committee.”
The proposed initiatives reflect and help satisfy the published standards of Lighthouse. While the first initiative (A) addresses board diversity and consumer representation on the Program Committee directly, the second initiative (B) is a feasible way to capture multiple perspectives of consumers to increase the diversity of individuals and ideas that help inform Lighthouse decisions.

Target Population

A. Homeless Representative on the Program Committee

Candidates for the homeless representative, a voluntary and non-paid position, should meet the following criteria:

1. Homeless or previously homeless in Sunshine County. This individual should be or have been homeless for an extended period of time in Sunshine County so that they have an in-depth understanding of the local homeless landscape (the services that are available, where they are located, gaps in service delivery, service fragmentation, where the homeless reside, etc).

2. Represent the target population of the new emergency shelter. Ideally, this individual should be a single male, as these demographic markers are possessed by the average Haven House user. Gender is an especially important variable as previous research on Haven House use by a Program Committee member exposes a disparity between the needs and experiences of men and women using homeless services.

3. Have a developed homeless social network. This individual should know and know how to contact other homeless individuals. This developed network should, in theory, allow this individual to represent the needs of the greater homeless community. In other words, this individual should be able to speak to the homeless community’s “concerns and needs” instead of individual level “problems.” This individual should also have open lines of communication with other homeless individuals so that he may communicate Program Committee business with them when and as required by the Program Committee.

4. Has used or is using Lighthouse programs or services. This individual should have experience using Lighthouse services so that they can speak to both the strengths and weaknesses of these services.

5. Commitment to the values and mission of Lighthouse. This individual should be deeply committed to the values and mission of Lighthouse for two reasons. The first is so that they can make recommendations to the Program Committee that embody the spirit of the organization. The second is because this individual will be a representative of Lighthouse to the greater homeless community and must accurately convey Lighthouse’s message and vision to this community.

If there are no candidates available that meet all of the above criteria, the candidate that most closely resembles these criteria should be selected.
Any Lighthouse staff, committee, or board members can suggest candidates for this position. However, the recruitment of candidates should fall largely on Lighthouse’s Homeless Services Division—which includes Haven House, its staff and SC 614—as they arguably have the most exposure to the homeless community. A proposed method for recruitment is to invite Haven House guests to nominate and or vote on their preferred representative(s). Ultimately, the Homeless Services Division and the Program Committee should have final selection and approval of the most desirable candidate with strong consideration given to candidates nominated by Haven House guests. The second most desirable candidate should be held on retainer, in the event that the selected homeless representative is unable to attend certain meetings or must resign the position.

The homeless representative selected may require additional training and/or coaching on Lighthouse organizational structure and procedures prior to their first Program Committee meeting. Due to their potential status as a homeless individual with limited resources, this individual may also require additional support to attend meetings. Additional efforts should be taken by staff in the Homeless Services Division and the Program Committee to facilitate the homeless representative’s ability to successfully serve this role. These efforts may including but are not limited to scheduling Program Committee meetings at a geographically convenient location for ALL Program Committee members and providing extra training and coaching on Lighthouse organizational matters as needed.

**B. Bi-monthly Focus Groups with Haven House Guests**

There are two roles relevant to this section—the role of the facilitator(s) and the role of the focus group participants. Both roles are on a voluntary, non-paid basis.

The Facilitator(s)

The facilitator(s) would serve as the liaison and representative for Lighthouse board, committee, and staff members and Lighthouse service users. As such, the facilitator(s) must have the trust and respect of both groups, access to both groups, and be an effective listener and communicator. This proposal, therefore recommends that the facilitator(s) role be fulfilled by one of the following options:

1. One individual who has knowledge of and experience with both groups but is a member of neither.
2. One individual from each group that has knowledge of and experience with the opposite group. This would result in two co-facilitators.
3. A combination of these options, which can result in two or three co-facilitators.

All individuals chosen as facilitator(s) should be committed to the vision and mission of Lighthouse. Because of the format suggested, it is preferred that at least one facilitator have experience conducting and recording focus groups. Any Lighthouse staff, committee, or board members and Haven House guests can suggest candidates for this position. Haven House staff and Lighthouse board, Program Committee, and staff members should have final decision over which option to choose, however, input from Haven House guests is strongly encouraged. The
benefits of selecting a service user as a co-facilitator is to increase the legitimacy of this initiative and encourage trust and participation by service users. In this case, Haven House guests should be given an opportunity to nominate candidates for this position.

If Lighthouse decides to select co-facilitators, these individuals will work together on a plan for organizing focus groups and sharing the results with Lighthouse.

Focus Group Participants

Focus groups should consist of guests of Haven House. All emergency shelter and transitional housing guests/clients can participate. The hope is that there is repeat attendance by some guests at these focus groups, however, due to the transient and temporary nature of this population, this may not always be possible.

Duration of Program

A. Homeless Representative on the Program Committee

This initiative should continue for as long as providing services to the homeless is a priority of the Advisory Board and, by extension, the Program Committee. If the selected homeless representative can no longer fulfill the duties of the position, the second most desirable candidate, being held on retainer, can temporarily fill this role until a stronger candidate can be selected. If there is no other candidate available to fill this role, the recruitment, nomination, and selection process described above should be reinstituted as quickly as possible. Ideally, a replacement should be selected prior to the official resignation of the previous homeless representative. However, if this is not possible, every attempt to secure a new homeless representative expeditiously should be undertaken.

B. Bi-monthly Focus Groups with Haven House Guests

This initiative should continue for as long as providing services to the homeless is a priority of Lighthouse. If the selected facilitator(s) can no longer fulfill the duties of the position, the recruitment, nomination, and selection process should be reinstituted as quickly as possible. Ideally, a replacement should be selected prior to the official resignation of the previous facilitator(s). However, if this is not possible, every attempt to secure a new facilitator(s) expeditiously should be undertaken. It is important to note that if co-facilitators are selected, any facilitator that resigns/leaves must be replaced even if their co-facilitator(s) remains.

Funding, Personnel, and Facilities

A. Homeless Representative on the Program Committee

The position of the homeless representative is designed to seamlessly integrate into current Lighthouse operations. As such, no additional funding, personnel, and facilities are required to implement and sustain this initiative. The Homeless Services Division staff will be tasked with the majority of the recruitment of this individual. Both The Homeless Services Division staff
and Program Committee members will join in the selection and support of this individual as they serve on the Program Committee. Facilities that may be utilized for the proposed initiative include Haven House (for recruitment, training, and coaching activities) and the facility selected for Program Committee Meetings.

B. Bi-monthly Focus Groups with Haven House Guests

This initiative is designed to seamlessly integrate into current Lighthouse operations. As such, no additional funding, personnel, and facilities are required to implement and sustain this initiative. The Advisory Board, committee, and staff members can recruit and select individuals, with strong considerations given to Haven House guest’s input. All focus groups will take place at Haven House in the men’s lounge or dinning room for the convenience of focus group participants. Results will be shared at board meetings and/or committee meetings.

Program Effect on Lighthouse and Community

The complex nature of today’s most pressing social problems begs for solutions reached through collaborative efforts (Bronstein, 2003; Bryson, 2004)\(^\text{28}\). Any public problem encompasses many individuals, groups, and organizations. Bringing these groups together with various areas of expertise inspires more creative solutions than unilateral thinking alone (Bronstein, 2003). This proposal seeks to address the issue of homelessness by proposing two initiatives that systematically capture client feedback. Research has uncovered several organizational and participant benefits to engaging in these types of initiatives, as described below.

There are multiple organizational benefits that result from eliciting client participation such as organizational legitimacy, the development of more effective policies and services, and more responsive service delivery, which reduces the likelihood of making costly changes to program design after implementation (LeRoux, 2009)\(^\text{29}\). Another organizational benefit is more successful decision making. Nutt (1999)\(^\text{30}\), for example, has concluded that half of all decisions made by organizations are abandoned due to failure. One reason for this includes failure to adopt commonly known, effective tactics, such as eliciting participation from key stakeholders and individuals who are affected by organizational decisions. Only 18% of the 386 organizations the author studied used participation. Managers reported not using participation as a strategy because they found it difficult to use, time consuming, and did not want to surrender control. However, the author found that managers who did implement this strategy actually gained control and had 80% of their organizational decisions made sustained.


Along with gains to the organization, individuals being invited to participate experience benefits from doing so. LeRoux (2009) notes that citizens engaged in participation develop a personal democratic identity and citizenship, feelings of empowerment, and feel as if they have fostered meaningful societal contributions. More specific to this context, interviews and focus groups with previous and current Haven House clients reveal barriers to effectively accessing and using emergency shelter. Feedback from clients prior to the implementation of services can help identify and correct these barriers. Ultimately, this will result in delivering enhanced services to the local homeless community.
### APPENDIX H: RESULTS FROM ANONYMOUS CLIENT CARDS

#### 2015 MONTHLY CLIENT COMMENT CARD SURVEY RESULTS

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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Quality of Services</th>
<th>Timeliness of Services</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Evening Programs</th>
<th>Case Management</th>
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#### Programming Graph

- Quality of Services
- Timeliness of Services
- Resources
- Evening Programs
- Case Management