

# Executive Summary

This publication reflects the experiences and analysis of many urban centers throughout North America and is compiled by a council of urban place management practitioners. While similarities and differences abound, there are only a handful of truly universal issues which permeate the core of each downtowns across the globe. Homelessness is a challenge which does not discriminate based on region, culture, language or creed. It is a human challenge with complexities which demand a detailed and thoughtful response, asking urban place managers to rise above the bare minimum and provide solutions that create meaningful and lasting change.

This IDA Council believes that addressing homelessness must be a priority for all downtown stakeholders. The need for new, comprehensive approaches in addressing the issue of homelessness has risen to the forefront of conversations in urban centers across the world. While the policy approaches are not simple, the council advocates for a declaration of four principles for urban place management organizations to use, which inspire engaged and active urban centers:

**HOUSING FIRST** - Advocate for "Housing First" solutions with strong ties to wrap-around services for "Whole-Person Care."

**PARTNERSHIPS** - Collaborate with high-quality social service providers, public agencies and local organizations that have the capacity to evaluate the social service needs of clients with the goal of moving the individual into solution services, such as permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing and scattered site housing.

**STAKEHOLDER BALANCE** - Balance the needs of the individuals experiencing homelessness with the expectations of our businesses, residents, property owners and visitors to downtown via regular communication.

**DATA, PROGRAMS AND POLICIES** - Invest in meaningful, data-driven and comprehensive policies, programs and services that assist in the ultimate end goal of meeting the

social service and housing needs of individuals experiencing homelessness, such as "work to hire."

To effectively make progress toward the goal of ending homelessness, there must be an honest conversation about policy alternatives and their impacts. There needs to be an understanding of the role that downtown associations and other place management organizations can play in addressing this important urban challenge.

