

## HOMELESSNESS IN RIVERSIDE WORKSHOP

OCTOBER 11, 2016

### *Homeless Court Program*

A Homeless Court Program is an alternative to the traditional criminal justice court system that would resolve outstanding misdemeanor offenses and warrants. To counteract the effect of criminal cases pushing homeless defendants further outside society, the Homeless Court Program combines a progressive plea bargain system, alternative sentencing structure, assurance of “no custody,” and proof of program activities to address a full range of misdemeanor cases. The Homeless Court Program would build on partnerships between the court, prosecutor, public defender, and local service agencies to help resolve the problems that homelessness represents with practical and effective solutions. We believe that when homeless participants work with agency representatives to identify and overcome the causes of their homelessness, they are in a stronger position to successfully comply with court orders.

In the County of Riverside, the only Homeless Court Program in operation is in the City of Indio. City staff have met with the Riverside County District Attorney’s Office to consider the possibility of establishing a Homeless Court Program in the City.