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# THE FIGHT FOR HOUSING: THE FRANKLIN HIAWATHA ENCAMPMENT

## UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

- #1** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- #10** Reduce inequality within and among countries.

## POSSIBLE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How can someone become unhoused?
- How is homelessness portrayed as a social and/or economic problem?
- What are some social and/or economic problems that could cause increased homelessness?
- What are some political, social and cultural influences that can determine the likelihood that someone can become unhoused?
- How do the causes and solutions for homelessness compare in different geographical locations?
- How are housing and shelter understood and approached across different places and cultures?

## BACKGROUND

The right to adequate housing and shelter is enshrined in Article 25 of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but encampments, temporary shelters, and housing movements are still contentious. Communities are searching for solutions with their unhoused neighbors. One is considered unhoused if they are without safe, stable and healthy access to housing. A person who is considered unhoused may live outside, in their car, on the streets or in temporary or transitional housing like shelters. When it comes to shelter and self-advocacy, many unhoused individuals will begin setting up tents and encampments. Areas such as San Francisco and Seattle are famous- or infamous- for unhoused encampments, but as inequality grows in the United States, areas with unhoused populations that were once considered invisible are faced with solving many issues that arise with encampments.

In the Spring of 2018, The Franklin Hiawatha Encampment, also known as the "Wall of Forgotten Natives", started with a few unhoused families and individuals placing tents and tarps on a strip of land next to Little Earth of United Tribes in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The location was chosen due to its high visibility and perceived safety. The camp would grow over several months and with its growth, it would draw attention from social workers, local media and city, state and tribal governments. The Franklin Hiawatha encampment quickly became Minnesota's largest unhoused encampment in state history and the community would need solutions before Fall and Winter temperatures set in. Finding solutions for housing and shelter would bring together a coalition of camp members, tribal leaders, city government officials, the nonprofit sector among many others. To date, the encampment has not transitioned into Winter ready shelter, but The Red Lake Nation has promised to lead on winterizing the encampment in its current location.

The camp is representative of the broad intersection of identities and circumstances within the unhoused community. The Franklin Hiawatha Encampment is predominantly composed of Native Americans. Some camp community members work full or part time, with one or multiple jobs while others are unemployed. Some have semi-stable housing or shelter options, others have been experiencing chronic homelessness. Addiction, health and ability are all concerns for the healers and volunteers working with the community. The community is built around families as well as individuals all seeking safety and communal empowerment.

Housing and shelter encampments are a very visible statements that draw attention from a wide range of perspectives to homelessness and the unhoused community. Encampments arise in communities all over the world, and they serve many similar and unique purposes. Encampments can create a sense of safety, community and permanence. They may also raise concerns around safety, public health and the right to public space. Individuals and communities who lose their housing due

to rising rents share a similar need to shelter as refugee populations fleeing violence and war.

The reasons for homelessness are complex and thus can be challenging to address. Sometimes, homelessness is seen as a cause of complex social and economic issues. Other times it results from social and economic problems. In the United States, public opinion varies dramatically from those who believe homelessness results from individual choices to those who view homelessness as the result of flawed policies.

Because of the complex nature of homelessness, there is no universal prescription to ensure that everyone has a home. Rather, solutions are often multifaceted and effective approaches to addressing homelessness may vary between communities and in different parts of the world. What works in Paris might not work in Algeria, or in the United States.

## RESOURCES

### Personal Stories

*Stories from The Franklin/Hiawatha Encampment:*

- [Welcome to the Camp Blog: All Together Now](#)
- [‘A blessing,’ ‘a family,’ and ‘a shame on Minneapolis’: Voices from the Hiawatha Avenue homeless encampment \(MinnPost\)](#)
- [Video: Franklin/Hiawatha Encampment the “Wall of Forgotten Natives”](#)

*Stories from around the world:*

- [About Homelessness \(Homeless Hub\)](#)
- [Transitioning While Homeless: Skylar’s Story \(Medium\)](#)
- [Fighting Homelessness, my way: Jamal Mechbal \(TEDx\)](#)
- [My Life, My Strength - Cristina Briones \(The Moth Podcast \(10:23\)\)](#)

### Art and Images

- [Art Gallery \(DrawBridge\)](#)
- [Faces of Santa Ana](#)
- [One homeless encampment cleared; another remembered \(The Circle\)](#)

### Articles

- [‘The emergency is now visible’: How the Hiawatha homeless encampment came to be. And what Minneapolis officials are trying to do about it \(MinnPost\)](#)
- [San Francisco votes to confiscate homeless tents, fails to pass funding to house them \(Curbed\)](#)
- [Seizure of Homeless Artist’s Prints an Exhibit of Injustice by City \(StreetSheet\)](#)
- [What’s behind rising homelessness in America? \(PBS\)](#)
- [Homelessness in New York Public Schools Is at a Record High: 114,659 Students \(The New York Times\)](#)
- [\\*Giving housing to the homeless is three times cheaper than leaving them on the streets \(VOX\)](#)
- [A tumultuous housing program in Algeria \(The New York Times\)](#)
- [Homelessness in the Central African Republic: Causes and Impacts \(The Borgen Project\)](#)
- [Almost No Choice: Homelessness and the Law \(Harvard Civil Rights- Civil Liberties Law Review\)](#)
- [State Patrol Clears Out Franklin-Hiawatha Homeless Encampment in Minneapolis \(CBS Minnesota\)](#)

### Data & Maps

- [San Francisco 2021 Sheltered Point-in-Time Count \(Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing\)](#)
- [Global homelessness statistics \(Homeless World Cup Foundation\)](#)
- [Central African Republic Situation Report \(OCHA\)](#)
- [Anti-Eviction Mapping Project](#)
- [State of Homelessness: 2021 Edition \(National Alliance to End Homelessness\)](#)

### Videos

- [Video: Sleeping rough, a compulsory step for asylum seekers in Paris? \(France 24\)](#)
- [Video: Central African refugees exiled across the river, long for home \(UNHCR\)](#)
- [Why cities are full of uncomfortable benches \(VOX\)](#)
- [Burundi street children caught up in clashes \(Al Jazeera\)](#)
- [@home: Youth Homelessness in Chicago \(Kindling Group\)](#)
- [Homelessness in America: The Journey Home | Israel Bayer \(TEDx\)](#)
- [Documentary Film: Shelter - 1:20:48 \(VICE\)](#)

### Websites

- [Homeless Hub \(Canada\)](#)
- [National Alliance to End Homelessness \(USA\) – FAQs](#)
- [Center for Evidence Based Solutions to Homelessness \(USA\) – Evidence Base](#)
- [Invisible People](#)
- [\\*Institute of Global Homelessness Hub- Institute of Global Homelessness](#)
- [How to Help the Franklin-Hiawatha Encampment \(St.](#)



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